# MEDITATIONS OF THE HEART

*A Book of Private Devotion for Old and Young*

# Meditations of the Heart

## A BOOK OF PRIVATE DEVOTION FOR OLD AND YOUNG

COLLECTED, ADAPTED, AND COMPOSED

BY

ANNIE JOSEPHINE LEVI

WITH AN INTRODUCTION BY

REV. DR. GUSTAV GOTTHEIL

May the words of my mouth and the meditations of my heart be acceptable in Thy sight, O Lord, my strength and my Redeemer.—Ps. XIX. 14.

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TO MY PARENTS

# INTRODUCTION

MISS LEVI has so fully explained her purpose in publishing this book that nothing remains for me to add but an expression of my hearty approval of both her idea and manner of carrying it out. Such a consensus of praying hearts cannot fail to strengthen our faith and bring us oftener than may be our wont to the footstool of the Father; whilst the warmth of feeling and happy wording may open up within us new springs of hope, strength and comfort which but for the magic of a master-hand might have remained closed forever. The mottoes, too, prefixed to each prayer, are of great value meant, I suppose, by Miss Levi, as a sort of key to what was in her own mind when she made the selections. Her aim from first to last is high ; it lies beyond the clouds of dogmatic and theological contrarieties, in the clear sun-

shine of Divine love and mercy ; and that she has spared no trouble or effort in the execution of her task I can testify from personal knowledge, and therefore cannot but wish her the fullest measure of spiritual success in her present endeavor.

GUSTAV GOTTHEIL.

# PREFACE

FROM a long-cherished desire on my part to possess a collection of morning and evening meditations which would impress me by virtue of their uplifting and varied thoughts, I was led to believe there must be others who shared that need with me. The mind will more readily accept lofty sentiments which are not clothed in the same garb day after day, the very fact of repetition serving to weaken rather than strengthen the powers of concentration. Thus, when we lift up our hearts in solemn devotion upon rising in the morning and retiring at night, inclosed, as it were, in a shrine of our own upbuilding, every accent we utter should be fraught with deep meaning. This cannot be wholly effected by constant reiteration of our petitions or words of praise. True, they will ascend as acceptably to Heaven in whatever form expressed,

but we finite creatures with limited receptive faculties require all that will aid towards strengthening the moral in our natures. Prayer means more to us than the most eloquent of sermons; it is God's own voice within and about us, summoning us far away from the world's cares and joys to the silence of His loving presence. It is the soft, sweet melody which vibrates along the heartstrings of the preacher and moves him to appeal to the Power which controls us all.

When it is well with us we say, "Thank God!" and pass on to the labors assigned us. When dark hours change the smiling aspect of our horizon sometimes we scarcely murmur, "God help us!" and in our despair well-nigh forget our former blessings.

Though prayer becomes thus an important factor in our lives, its true mission is not fulfilled until the innermost depths of man and woman have been stirred to some noble act, some lasting good.

A ritual, alone, does not completely satisfy the spiritual yearning for higher things, and may in time become mechanical. The spontaneous, sincerest of all supplication, cannot always respond to our soul's appeal. How often in the deepest sadness

the words we would pray remain locked in our hearts with the grief itself! Therefore, we can welcome utterances framed by others who have been moved by the spirit under the same powerful circumstances which enter into each individual's daily existence. A supplement to, rather than a substitute for a ritual, helpful communings of whatever faith can be productive of good only, providing they offend no particular creed.

And so I present this volume (primarily designed for my Jewish brothers and sisters) to the public of any and all creeds, and especially for the benefit of those who, in the rush of every-day life, have not paused to commune with their Maker. These simple meditations, collected from sources the most soulful, will perhaps appeal to their hearts and lead them into regions divine, where their joys will be enhanced and their sorrows mitigated. The younger generation, the future men and women, have likewise been remembered, with the earnest hope that they may be led to seek their Creator in a spirit of gratitude and love.

A word as to the secular quotations. A hasty survey may cause some to regard them as inappropriate in a volume designed as a book of devotion.

But closer observation will remove this objection for, as far as possible, I have fitted the thought to the meditation following it, the one serving as preparation for the other, but in every case both harmonize in being strong and uplifting in sentiment. Therefore, in placing the author's name after each fragment of verse or prose, I have not feared that such would divert the mind from its devotional attitude.

I tender my sincere thanks to Rev. Dr. F. de Sola Mendes for his friendly counsel and invaluable aid; to Rev. Dr. Gustav Gottheil, for his "Introduction" and kindly interest and suggestions; to Fords, Howard & Hulbert, through whose courtesy I have been at liberty to make selections from *A Book of Prayer* and *Comforting Thoughts*, by Rev. Henry Ward Beecher; and Doubleday & McClure Co. for a prayer by Rev. Dr. Robert Collyer[1]; to Longmans, Green & Co., for permission to insert the two accompanying *Home Prayers*, by Rev. Dr. Martineau; Houghton, Mifflin & Co., for Thoreau's *Prayer;* likewise, Bloch Publishing and Printing Company, for the contribution from

[1] Reprinted from *Prayers Ancient and Modern.* (Mrs. M. W. Tileston.)

the writings of Rev. Isaac Leeser and Hester Rothschild ; to Rev. Charles Voysey, for the privilege of reprinting several meditations from his *Theistic Prayer Book*, and to the Central Conference of Rabbis for the same privilege regarding matter contained in *The Union Prayer Book for Jewish Worship*. I also desire to thank *The Christian Register* for two prayers taken from its columns, and *The New York Tribune* and *The Jewish Messenger* for the use of the poems, *Rest* and *A Prayer*.

Lastly, but far from being of least importance, I must record my grateful appreciation of the service rendered me by those spiritual guides whose prompt responses to my request, in the midst of their active lives, have assisted towards enriching this collection ; not forgetting the many who must be nameless whose word of encouragement helped to lighten my undertaking.

A prayer goes forth with this little book : that it may bear on its journey a message of hopeful joy, and that the outpourings of my own soul be the means of bringing comfort to the heavy-hearted, so that this, my labor of love, shall reap thus its sweetest, most enduring reward. A. J. L.

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# PART I

## DAILY MEDITATIONS

I reverence old-time faith and men,
But God is near us now, as then ;
His force of love is still unspent,
His hate of sin as imminent ;
And still the measure of our needs
Outgrows the cramping bounds of creeds.

JOHN G. WHITTIER.

Have we not all one father? Hath not one God created us?

*Mal. ii. 10.*

# PRAYER

GREAT God! I ask Thee for no meaner pelf
Than that I may not disappoint myself;
That in my conduct I may soar as high
As I can now discern with this clear eye;
And next in value, which Thy kindness lends,
That I may greatly disappoint my friends,
Howe'er they think or hope that it may be,
They may not dream how Thou 'st distinguished me;
That my weak hand may equal my firm faith,
And my life practise more than my tongue saith;
That my low conduct may not show,
Nor my relenting lines,
That I Thy purpose did not know,
Or overrated Thy designs.

HENRY D. THOREAU.

## GENERAL THANKSGIVING

O praise the Lord, all ye nations: praise Him all ye people. For His merciful kindness is great toward us: and the truth of the Lord endureth forever. Praise ye the Lord.

*Ps. cxvii. 1, 2.*

WE come to Thee, O God, with thankful hearts for all the bounty of another harvest-home. For Thy sunshine and Thy rain, for Thy dew and for Thy winds that strengthen root and stalk, for the cool nights that have refreshed the fields parched by the blazing sun, for the mountains that have gathered up the vapors of the heavens into clouds, and for the brooks and rivers that have brought down their precious store to make the lowlands glad—for all these things we would be grateful here and now. And, *with* Thee, O God, we would be grateful to Thy children who, bending weary backs above the planted wheat and corn, have been

fellow-laborers with Thee and made it possible for Thee to fill their barns with plenty and their hearts with joy. For all faithful men and women doing the world's needed work of any kind, at forge or desk or lawn, with hammer, spade, or pen, with voice or vote, with the soft arms of motherhood, with filial service kind and sweet and brave, we thank Thee, blessed God. For the great heart of human sympathy that has gone out to cheer and help and bless, we thank Thee, gracious God. And may it be so with us that if our lives have been full of happiness and peace, we may the more tenderly remember those who have been less fortunate. We would not be hardened into selfishness by our pleasures and delights, nor embittered by our miseries and pains. If for us life has been hard and wearisome, we would be glad that for so many others it has been full of joy and peace. We would cherish lovingly the bright vision of those who much less fortunate than we, have been much more uncomplaining, cheerful, glad ; and we would try to learn the secret of their courage and their peace if haply we may enter into it as into a kingdom that is ours to rule and sway. From out our gratitude to Thee for all Thy mercies, may there

grow a steadfast high intent and firm resolve to make our lives hereafter more just and beautiful and kind and true than they have been heretofore. Even so shalt Thou, O God, rejoice in us as we in Thee, and we shall be one Family on earth and in heaven, Thyself the master of the feast, the source of all our joy. *Amen.*

## MORNING

God's ways seem dark, but, soon or late,
They touch the shining hills of day ;
The evil cannot brook delay ;
The good can well afford to wait.

JOHN G. WHITTIER.

OUR Father, our heart's desire is toward Thee, toward our home, this morning. Behold, how we wander and are lost ! See how unwearied are selfishness and pride that perpetually lie in wait for us ; how, in alternation with that which is best in us, they rise up with earnest endeavor, and how to do good is not present with us. Behold what struggle, what slow attainment, what retrogression there is, and have compassion upon us, for we are very weak ; strong in the desire but feeble in the fulfillment thereof.

There is a land of the blessed where no sun shall rise, for days are not measured there ; nor is there

any moon there to give light by night. Thou art the light thereof, and all that are gathered therein have eternal joy and eternal peace—joy that leaves no regret behind, and peace that chides not. We do not know, we cannot conceive what that life must be in which the body is dropped, and the processions of this world have passed away and only the spirit is left. We do not understand its law, nor its experience, nor anything of it, save that we shall be as Thou art, that Thy glory shall be our light, and that Thou art the cause of that joy which shall forever and forever abide, and fill the cups that never empty.

We rejoice that that great estate is so near to us. Thou dost not reserve it always till men have toiled through many, many years. Thou dost lead into it the little ones who have had no experience of earth and sin. Thou takest those that are yet children, those that from the beginning of their years walk in an inexperienced life, those from out of the burdens and the midst of life itself, and those that are ripe and strong. Thou hast not filled up, blessed be Thy name, the whole realm; and yet Thou hast filled the seats that waited for multitudes whom we have known and loved.

Their life is with us in memory. They do not forget us. They love us better than when they were on earth ; and we are hastening thither to meet them again ; where all care shall have departed forever.

Grant that in the hope and certainty of this rest which remaineth for the people of God, we may lift up our head in the midst of storm, undiscouraged and undismayed. May we walk worthy of the high vocation wherewith we are called. May we not with coward hearts turn into complaint our experience from day to day, but bear hardness as good soldiers. May we not be made haughty by worldly prosperity, nor be depressed by adversity. May we take all things as sent of God. May all experiences, all joys, all sorrows, be as so many schoolmasters, training us for the higher life. Grant that we may walk with an even mind from day to day, full of hope and full of the joy that is to come.

Be with all those that are in perplexity and doubt in regard to their happiness. May they know how to cast their burden on the Lord who careth for them.

Grant, we pray Thee, that those who are bereaved and who sit in the memory of their great

sorrow may find companionship in Thee. While Thou knowest Thy work, we know it not. Thou canst comfort them, for Thou art the God of all consolation. We pray that Thou wilt help those who see men as trees walking, who discern truths only as mystery figured before their minds. Grant that in all the truths that pertain to our salvation we may have that lens of love through which all things are plain. Teach us to discern Thy nature, and the nature that Thou wouldst have in us. In our pilgrimage may we not wander from the great highway of the Lord. *Amen.*

Those who bring sunshine to the lives of others cannot keep it from themselves. JAMES M. BARRIE.

O LORD, my God, to Thee are due my first thoughts as I awake from the nightly rest. I lift my heart unto Thee, rejoicing in the gift of life and grateful for the love with which Thou hast watched over and protected me even while my soul seemed to have left its normal dwelling. Wonderful and inscrutable as are the laws by whose unfailing work body and mind are daily quickened and life continues in its rhythmic sway, I feel, O Heav-

enly Father, it is Thy beneficence that speaks through them, and it is of this I fain would show myself worthy. Thus do I praise Thee, acknowledging Thy power and wisdom and goodness.

What are man's efforts and achievements compared with the arm which shapes worlds and keeps them in their appointed paths! What is man's significance in the presence of the everlasting wisdom which shines through suns and stars and is echoed in the records of ages of life! What is one man's goodness when measured by the benevolence voiced in the beautiful devices of creation and reflected in the holy visions of perfection granted to the purest and best of mankind! And yet I rejoice that I may speak to Thee, knowing that Thou art near to all those who call upon Thee in truth. Though the heavens cannot exhaust Thy glory, yet hast Thou not disdained to reveal Thyself in spirit to the lowliest, and dost ever look to the humble and contrite of heart.

*Thou* needst not human service: *man* cannot abide without Thy aid. I pray Thee, therefore, withhold not Thy help from me and guard me in my daily life. Looking up to Thy holiness, let me not swerve from Thy law in any dealings with my

fellow-men. Feeling deeply the meagreness of my merit when measured by the standard of Thy righteousness, let me neither claim undue praise for any right deed nor feel aggrieved by deserved rebuke. Help me, O God, that through the daily experience I may grow more robust in sound thinking and just doing. May the thought of Thee as the God of the spirits of all flesh rule and guide me, so that in every human being I revere Thy image, and willfully causing hurt to none I may act in a spirit of kind consideration and helpfulness to all with whom the day's task may bring me in touch. Bowing my head in reverence before the providence which hedges me about, may I receive all that is sent to me of good or evil with a grateful heart and loyal resignation. And even while I thank Thee this morning for the joys and happiness of the life vouchsafed to me and my beloved ones, I pray to Thee to give me a clean heart and renew in me a firm spirit, that I may be ever ready to acknowledge the righteousness of Thy will whatsoever may be my lot in the future. Thus shall I realize with Thy blessing, the bliss of walking before Thee and be gladdened by the sentiment of the sacred singer: a day in Thy courts is better than a thousand elsewhere.

Praised be Thy name, Eternal One, my Rock and Redeemer. *Amen.*

Father of all! in every age,
In every clime adored,
By saint, by savage and by sage,
Jehovah, Jove or Lord.

ALEXANDER POPE.

LORD of all worlds! Not in reliance upon righteousness or merit in ourselves do we make our supplications to Thee; but trusting in Thine infinite mercy alone. For what are we, what is our life, what our goodness, what our power? What can we say in Thy presence? Are not all the mighty men as naught before Thee and those of great renown as though they had never been; the wisest as if without knowledge, and the men of understanding as if without discernment? Behold, nations are but as a drop of water; they are accounted as the grains of dust in the balance. Many of our actions are vain, and our days pass away like a shadow. Our life would be altogether vanity were it not for the soul which, fashioned in Thine own image, gives us assurance of our higher destiny, and imparts to our fleeting days an abiding value.

We, therefore, beseech Thee, O our God, to help

us banish from our hearts all pride and vain-glory, all confidence in worldly possessions, all self-sufficient leaning on our own reason. Fill us with the spirit of meekness and the grace of modesty, that we may become wise in Thy fear. May we never forget that all we have and prize is but lent to us, a trust for which we must render an account to Thee. We beseech Thee, O Heavenly Father, to put into our hearts the love and fear of Thee, that we may consecrate our lives to Thy service and glorify Thy name in the eyes of all peoples. *Amen.*

The heights by great men reached and kept
Were not attained by sudden flight,
But they while their companions slept
Were toiling upward in the night.

HENRY W. LONGFELLOW.

O THOU most holy and ever-loving God, we thank Thee once more for the quiet rest of the night that has gone by, for the new promise that has come with this fresh morning, and for the hope of this day. While we have slept, the world in which we live has swept on in its awful space, great fires have burned under us, great waters have been all about us, and great storms above us ; but Thou hast held them back by Thy strong hand, and we have rested

under the shadow of Thy love. The bird sat on the spray out in the darkness, the flower nestled in the grass, we lay down in our home, and all slept in the arms of God. The bird will trust Thee this day to give its morsel of meat, and the flower will trust Thee for its fresh raiment ; so may we trust Thee this day for all the needs of the body, the soul, and the spirit. Give us this day our daily bread. *Amen.*

From every place below the skies
The grateful song, the fervent prayer,—
The incense of the heart may rise
To heaven, and find acceptance there.

JOHN PIERPONT.

WITH a glowing and a grateful heart do I hail the return of the sunny morn. The Lord in His mercy hath held me up during the dark and fearful night, and hath permitted me once more to hail the glad and glorious approach of day. I will seek the Lord in the early morning when all is silent around me, when there is a holy calm in the stillness of nature, that softens every tumultuous feeling and calms the weary spirit, and fills the soul with adoration. Then will I seek the Almighty, ere the cares, thoughts, and desires of this world

have entered my heart; and He will bend His gracious ear to the prayers and praises of a child of sin, if offered up in love, in reverence, and in adoration. I will awake from sleep, and arise early to seek my Creator, and offer Him the homage of a sinful, yet contrite heart, and in His infinite mercy He will deign to listen to my prayers. O how I love the Lord for all His mercies towards me! In sorrow have I sought Him, and He hath answered me. Think then, O my soul, how can I repay the manifold blessings I have received from the hand of my God; in what way dare I hope to evince the gratitude that gloweth in my heart! Think of all thy imperfections, thy follies, and thy sins. How difficult I sometimes find it to give up the inclinations of my heart! Think on all this, O my soul, and know that fervent prayer alone can obtain pardon for my sins, and strength to guard against them. And what good do I do? Satisfy not thyself, my soul, with the thought that thou hast no opportunities of doing good; many there are, but careless and impatient, they are overlooked. Be on thy guard then, my soul, and let this day be passed in a manner acceptable to the Almighty, and pleasing to thyself. Beware, not to fall into

the snares of temper and impatience. Lord, give me strength that I may walk in Thy ways, and become a good and faithful servant of Thy law. *Amen.*

Let us not run over our prayers with an insensible and distracted mind.

*Select Sentences.*

FATHER and God! Guided by Thy grace, I am again permitted to open my eyes to the beauties of Thy creation, and the hours of sleep have passed away, and imparted to me new strength to stand in Thy presence. I feel that all I am, I am through Thee, and it is Thy wondrous power which has ordered things so, that the apparent death of sleep gives fresh vigor to the weary limbs, and renewed life to the exhausted spirit to toil, to labor and to enjoy. O let me be conscious of this during the hours of waking, that I may not fill my soul with the impurity of sin, and sink unawares into the pitfalls of iniquity. Stand by me, O omnipresent Goodness! to teach me to distrust my deceitful heart, that I may not be misled by the advice of the ungodly to seize on the evil instead of the good, and to choose thus death instead of life; for in Thy Law alone can we live, through

obedience to Thy voice solely can we enter the portals of happiness. Yet it is difficult for an humble mortal to be faithful, without ever erring; for lo! in Thy inscrutable wisdom, Thou hast decreed that the righteous shall not be always prosperous, and that occasionally the wicked should triumph, while they dare to rebel against Thy decree. It is in such moments of doubt that men will falter, and will not value enough Thy holy will. Therefore, I beseech Thee, open my eyes to the truth of Thy word, that I may see the wonders of Thy law; that I may be enabled to battle firmly against the pride which dwells within me and which would fain cause me to measure my wisdom against Thine, to wander in the deceitful dream of my own imagination, far from the bounds set to us by the religion which Thou didst reveal to our fathers. Yes, bless Thy servant with Thy spirit, that Thy wisdom may enlighten me to distinguish mercy in punishment, and kindness in sore disappointment. For lo! our days are but shadows on the earth, and soon Thy decree will summon us away and darken to our breaking eyes the earth and all its glory. Bless me, therefore, with understanding to distinguish Thy paternal care in all that may happen to

me during my earthly pilgrimage, that my path may be open before me, and I become worthy of Thy love and mercy, by the deeds which I shall be permitted to acquire as my own inheritance of earthly life. Bless those who are dear to me, that they may not toil in vain, nor need this day and forever the bounty of flesh and blood. But give us all our daily bread in honor and peace; so that, fed from Thy ever full hand, we may have time and means to exert ourselves in Thy service, to scatter blessings among the afflicted whom Thou hast left with us; that we may imitate Thee in Thy work of goodness, to be messengers of mercy, to dispense charity and kindness on the path of our journey to Thy mansions.

If it be Thy will, let this day pass without tribulation, and grant me bodily health and cheerfulness of mind to a high and contented age. But, if it be decreed from Thee that pain should rack my bones, and disease invade my heart and limbs, then let me find in Thee a prop in my sorrows, that I may be resigned and hopeful, though all around me be shrouded in gloom and darkness.

Be my support in all positions which may be assigned unto me, and let me recognize Thee at all

times as the Almighty, Eternal One, the God of our fathers, Abraham, Isaac and Israel, who art the same in life and in death, in our joys and our sorrows, who willest to bless, because Thou art good and merciful. *Amen.*

If word of mine another's gloom has brightened,
Through my dumb lips the heaven-sent message came ;
If hand of mine another's task has lightened,
It felt the guidance that it dares not claim.

OLIVER WENDELL HOLMES.

GOD of all love and compassion, we pray Thee to pour upon us the spirit of grateful worship, that at the beginning of this day we may think upon all the good gifts and blessings which Thy mercy hath bestowed. For our life, health and safety ; for the supply of our daily food, clothing, shelter and needful rest ; and for all Thy countless benefits, may our hearts overflow with praise. Yet, above all, fill us with thankfulness for having been able to know Thee, and to look up to Thee as our Father and Friend ; and for the thousand comforts we have enjoyed, and the numberless consolations we have received, through trusting in Thee. O merciful Father, help us to feel so thankful in our hearts that we may show forth Thy praise not only

with our lips, but in our lives ; that we may always first and foremost strive to do Thy will and to please Thee. May a sense of Thy goodness continually inspire us with goodness to each other and with fidelity to every duty and obligation. Let Thy bounty fill us with a holy joy that shall spread a light over our lives, and over the lives of those around us ; for so only can we render to Thee any return for Thy boundless love. Forgive us our sins in order that we may forsake them, and teach us to hunger and thirst after righteousness. *Amen.*

Teach thy tongue to say, I do not know.

*Talmud.*

O GOD, guard my tongue from evil and my lips from uttering deceit. Be my support when grief silences my voice, and my comfort when woe bends my spirit. Plant humility in my soul, and strengthen my heart with perfect faith in Thee. Help me to be strong when temptations and trials come and to be meek when others wrong me, that I may readily forgive them. Guide me by the light of Thy counsel, and let me ever find rest in Thee, who art my strength and my Redeemer. *Amen.*

Our God is a household God as well as a heavenly one; He has an altar in every man's dwelling; let men look to it when they rend it lightly and pour out its ashes.

JOHN RUSKIN.

ALL-GRACIOUS, All-merciful God! Thy paternal goodness has permitted me to awaken after a refreshing sleep and sent the gladdening rays of morning to revive me anew.

O Heavenly Father! How great is the mercy which Thou hast shown unto me. My first emotion is, therefore, to thank Thee from the inmost of my heart for Thy providential watchfulness over my life, and for having protected me whilst the darkness of night surrounded me.

How many of my fellow-creatures but yesternight ascended the couch in good health and hopes, and yet cannot leave it this day, from being bound to it by pains and suffering! How many may have yesternight sank to sleep amidst riches and affluence, but who are brought to poverty this morning by sudden disasters! Alas! how many others are languishing perhaps in the dark gloom of a prison, in which no friendly ray of joy penetrates, and how large may be the number of those who slept last night never to awaken any more in this world!

How thankful I therefore ought to be, heavenly Creator! for Thy having warded off every danger from me, for having preserved my health and restored me to the arms of my relations and friends! O let me ever sustain this feeling of gratitude within my heart, so that I may faithfully discharge my religious and domestic duties; that I may meet my fellow-creatures with loving-kindness like as Thou hast shown unto me; and that I may ever extol Thee, who causeth the sleeper to awake, and wilt cause those who sleep the sleep of death to awaken to eternal life. *Amen.*

No one is worthy of the best the world can afford who has not schooled himself to dc without it when it cannot be obtained except at the price of dishonor.

GEORGE WILLIS COOKE.

SOURCE of all good! Day by day are Thy blessings renewed to us: and how should our thanksgivings cease? Our fathers rejoiced to sing Thy praise; and from their children's offering Thou wilt not turn away. The rest of night, the light of day, we gratefully receive as Thy gifts, and would dedicate to the service of Thy will. O that we too could be re-born like the morning, and

our love rise as fresh as the dawn, and our obedience be as sure as the path of the sun ! For, as we commune with Thee, many shadows from the past dim the joy of Thy presence. When we remember our thoughtless lives, our impatient tempers, our selfish aims, we know that Thou hast left us without excuse. Thou hast neither made us blind, like the creatures that have no sin, nor left us without holy guidance ; Thy still small voice speaking in our inmost conscience ; and Thine open word having dwelt among us, full of grace and truth, appealing to us to choose the better part. We are not our own, and are ashamed to have lived unto ourselves. Thou hast formed us for Thy service ; and we must hide our face, that we have shrunk from the glorious hardness of our task. Our daily work has not been wrought as in Thy sight. The trials of our patience we have received as earthly pains of nature, not as the heavenly discipline of faith ; and the fullness of thy bounties has come to us as dead comfort, not as the living touch of Thy love. O true and only God ! we have lived in a bondage to the world which bringeth no content ; and the passions we serve are as strange idols that cannot deliver. Awake, O Arm of the Lord ! and burst our

bonds asunder ; and take us to serve Thee in newness of spirit. May we dread above all the poisoned sweetness of sin, and choose rather the bitterest draughts of healthful duty. The cup which our Father hath given us, shall we not drink it?

O Thou discerner of thoughts ! May we not fall into the snares of a self-deceiving mind. When our holy resolves spring up, may they not wither away because there is no deepness of earth : but, O Thou Lord of the harvest, enrich the furrows of our nature, and hide Thy good seed from the cares of this world, and nourish it with the dews of Thy pure grace. Humbled by our past infirmities, may we lean no more on our own strength, unsanctified by the memory of Thee. May a constant sense of Thy presence give us a composed and reverent soul, open our lips with thoughtful and quiet words, fill us with great and gentle thoughts, and sweep away with a holy breath every dust of care, every trace of fear, and every taint of an uncharitable mind.

O God of future years ! our age is nothing unto Thee. We are here this morning : ere eventide, we may be gone and sunk into the shadows. Our

life is as a dream, when one awaketh. May we be as those that lie in wait for the dawning: and when we awake, may we still be with Thee. For time and for eternity we commit ourselves to Thee, O Lord. *Amen.*

Religion in no way saves us from afflictions; but it supports us under them, it gives us what nothing else can give, the unvarying comfort of a Father's love, and an unfailing hope in heaven. *Select Sentences.*

O HEAVENLY Father! Through Thy mercy I have awakened this morning, my mind and body strengthened by sleep; my eyes once more enjoy the beauties of Thy creation and my voice can sing again the glorious name of the Creator. Full of gratitude and love I exclaim with the prophet: "Thy mercies are renewed every morning, great is Thy faithfulness." Grant that this new day given by Thy paternal kindness may not be lost to my fellow-creatures or myself; may it be one of the useful days of my life. I know not how long I have yet to live, how soon I may be called to render an account of my deeds here below. May this thought, O God! be ever present to my mind so that I turn not from the path of righteousness.

Teach me to comprehend the aim and destiny of my existence; teach me to walk this day and every day in the way appointed by Thy commandments, so that my thoughts and actions may be agreeable to Thee. Bless my labors this day, and preserve me from every temptation and every sin.

Hearken to this my prayer, O Lord! for Thou art my support, my strength and my hope. *Amen.*

> We pass; the path that each man trod
> Is dim, or will be dim, with weeds:
> What fame is left for human deeds
> In endless age? It rests with God.
>
> ALFRED TENNYSON.

MY God, the soul which Thou hast given unto me came pure from Thee. Thou hast created it, Thou hast formed it, Thou hast breathed it into me, Thou hast preserved it in this body and, at the appointed time, Thou wilt take it from this earth that it may enter upon the life everlasting. While the soul animates my being I will worship Thee, Sovereign of the world and Lord of all souls. Blessed be Thou, O Lord, in whose hands are the souls of all the living and the spirits of all flesh. *Amen.*

As a plant upon the earth, so man rests upon the bosom of God.

RALPH WALDO EMERSON.

OUR Father who art in heaven, Thou Soul of our souls, and Safeguard of the world, we flee to Thee to sing our morning psalm, to pray our morning prayer, bringing the offering of gratitude from our hearts, and asking of Thee the gift of Thy holy spirit. Thou sendest down Thy sunlight on the world, Thou rainest Thy rain to still the dust and pacify the stones of the street crying for moisture from the skies, and we know that Thou wilt feed our spirits with Thine inspiration, ministering truth to the hungry mind, justice to the conscience that asketh right of Thee, and wilt pour Thy holy love on every earnest, seeking, asking soul.

We thank Thee for Thy broad providence which careth for the grass in the fields, and adorneth every little flower that fringes the hedgerows of life, and careth also for the mighty orbs above our heads and the solid ground beneath our feet; and Thyself art not hard to find, nor far to seek, but art with every living soul of man. Father, we thank Thee for Thy justice which presideth over this world, and out of evil bringeth forth good con-

tinually, disappointing the wickedness of men, and doing all things for our good. We thank Thee for Thine unbounded love which caused us to be, which made this fair world, which waiteth for us in our transgressions, and goeth out to meet us, prodigals or penitent, a great way off, and blesseth still Thy wandering, even unrepentant child. We thank Thee for Thy voice in our hearts, for the inspiration which Thou givest to the sons of men to show us the way in which we should go, to rebuke us for every folly, to chastise us for every sin, but to encourage everything that is holy and noble and true in our hearts.

We thank Thee for the noble examples of human excellence which Thou raisest up from time to time, the landmarks of human life, and our guiding lights to lead us safely home to port and peace, to heaven here and heaven at last with Thee.

We pray Thee that we may be faithful and true to every gift which Thou hast given us. In a time of darkness, when great men are a deceit and little men are a lie, may our heart never fail us, nor we hesitate nor despair for a moment of Thy goodness and Thy truth. Though hand join in hand, teach us that wickedness cannot prosper, nor iniquity

endure. Fix our eyes on the true, the right, the holy, the beautiful, and the good, till we love them and therein love Thee with an affection that cannot be ashamed and will not be defeated. Teach us to be blameless in our daily life, to be heroic in our conduct, distinguishing between the doctrines of men and Thine everlasting commandments. Help us to love Thee, the Creator, more than the creatures before our eyes ; to imitate Thy justice, to share Thy truth, and to spread abroad Thy living love to all mankind. Are we weak,—and we know we are,—give us strength ; sinners,—and our heart cries out against us,—chastise and rebuke us till we repent of our sin, and come back with humble hearts to worship Thee in holiness, in nobleness, and in truth. Give us the love of Thyself which shall tread down every passion under its feet that wars against the soul, that shall make our daily lives beneficent, and so cast out every fear, the fear of man, and the fear, O Lord, of Thee. Help us to know Thee in Thine immensity, to feel Thee and to love Thee in Thine infinite love, till every weight is cast off from us, and with Thy sunshine on our wings we mount up as eagles and fly towards Thee. We pray that we may be armed

against temptation and fortified inly for every duty, prepared for every emergency, and ready to serve Thee with our limbs and our lives.

We ask Thy blessing on all sorts and conditions of men in the various departments of our mortal lives. May the young be trained up in innocence, and taught, not to fear men, but to love their brothers and to love Thee. When sundered but joyful souls are by their affection wedded and made one, may a higher life spring up in their united hearts, and may they serve Thee with blameless beauty and celestial piety set in a mortal life. In the various trials of our daily business teach us to be honest, and to love men, to respect the integrity of our own souls, and never waver, turned this side by the fear of men, and that side by the lust for their praise and their admiration.

O Lord, Thy charity never faileth. Touch the hearts of men with humanity that they may learn justice and to love their brothers. Make us nobler and braver and holier. Teach us to love all men. So let us be Thy children, loving those that hate us, and praying for such as despitefully use us. So may Thy Kingdom come, and Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven. *Amen.*

Not enjoyment, and not sorrow,
Is our destined end or way;
But to act, that each tomorrow
Find us farther than today.

HENRY W. LONGFELLOW.

O FATHER, we thank Thee for all the blessings Thou hast conferred upon us. Only teach us, we earnestly pray Thee, to make ourselves worthy of them by living the life which Thou wouldst have us live. Help us to be strong in doing the right and in resisting the inclination or temptation to wrong-doing. Let us know how to do that which is pleasing in Thine eyes, to do justly, to show loving-kindness, and to be modest.

Guide us in our work to-day. We commit our ways to Thee. Grant that we may do nothing which Thou canst not countenance. We trust ourselves and our dear ones in Thy holy keeping, and ask that the Everlasting arms may keep and shield us, O Thou our Helper, Savior and Shield. *Amen.*

Let not the blessings we receive daily from God make us not to value or not praise Him because they be common.

IZAAK WALTON.

I THANK Thee, Almighty, for the blessing of the dawn, and even as Thou hast rolled away the clouds and the darkness of the night, so may light and peace shine through all obstacles and dangers of the coming day. Thou hast guarded me in my sleeping hours, guide me as well now that my eyes are opened, and direct my steps as Thou wouldst have me go. I thank Thee for the blessings of the day, the awakening to new life and activity, the inspirations of each hour, the renewed opportunities for helpful living. Make me judge between the good and the evil and aid me in the choice of what is permanent and genuine for me and mine. If it be Thy will, give me the strength to accomplish the nearer duty and obey the truer impulse. And let my efforts tend toward human betterment, whatever the strain and the sacrifice. And thus with resolute purpose and lofty ambition for the highest and the best, do Thou protect me until the shadows fall and shining stars of Thy mercy watch over us all in our sleep. *Amen.*

The Lord will command His loving-kindness in the day-time, and in the night His song shall be with me, a prayer unto the God of my life. *Ps. xlii. 8.*

ALMIGHTY Father, who knowest all that we have need of before we ask Thee, help us to feel our true necessity, and to desire only what Thou art ready to give. We cannot live in happy trust in Thee unless we are trying to do our duty by each other; so we pray Thee to fill us with Thy blessed spirit of love and kindness and generous sympathy, that we may enter more into each other's joys and sorrows, and be able to realize what they need to heal their wounds or to satisfy their wants. Make us specially kind and gentle to those who are most distasteful to us. Above all keep us from a captious and quarrelsome temper, from all careless or willful misunderstandings, and from every unkind suspicion. May we learn to see more and more good in those who surround us, even while we are scrupulously watchful to discern their faults, and not to call evil good, or good evil. Teach us to make our lives blest by adding a little at least this day to the happiness and welfare of others. We are often wayward and fretful, prejudiced and unjust, cross and ready to take offense; and sometimes

others around us are so, too. O good Lord, deliver us from ourselves; let us learn to take this discipline from Thy loving hand, and so to improve our own characters by patience and justice and blindness to offense. Help us to conquer all our vexation by love and forgiveness, remembering our own need of Thy mercy and forbearance. In our work, be Thou our light and our strength. In our happiness, make us grateful to Thee and modest towards each other and to those who differ from us. In our care, be Thou our comforter, our rest, and our hope. In our sorrow, be Thou our nearest and dearest consoler. In life and in death —come when it may—be Thou our loving Father and our Eternal Friend. *Amen.*

The prayer of prayers is this: Thy will be done.

O. B. Frothingham.

BEFORE Thee, O my God, lie open the secrets of every heart. Thou understandest my thoughts afar off and art acquainted with all my ways. Thou knowest how grateful I am for the manifold mercies which Thou hast shown to me and to my loved ones. They are more than I can number, greater than I can measure, and better

than I can understand. When it seemed good to Thee to try me with sorrows and to take from me what was so unspeakably dear to me, Thou didst not leave me comfortless. Thy power sustained me, and I have learned to trust in Thee and to believe truly that all Thy dispensations are meant for good and not evil. Help me, O Father, to preserve in my home the blessings of peace and of the sweet intercourse of souls united in the bonds of love. Let me always remember that I must not live to myself only, but to Thee and to my fellow-men, especially the poor and the distressed. Hear the prayers of those who worship with me at this hour, who pour out their souls to Thee, and grant them the joy that comes to us whenever we commune with Thee. Let Thy light shine upon us and be gracious unto us, Thy children. *Amen.*

Our remedies oft in ourselves do lie,
Which we ascribe to Heaven.

SHAKESPEARE.

FORTH from out of Thine infinite fullness, O Thou whose thoughts move the endless procession of summer in all faithfulness and beauty, forth from Thine own self, the Centre of excellence, give

to us this day life and light and joy, that we may seem to ourselves to be enwrapped by our God, to live in Him, to partake of Him, and to be apprehended by Him. Remove all doubts, all darkness, all misapprehension from our minds; and as Thou dost blow away the clouds and storms, that we may behold the stars by night and the sun by day, so may our fear and care be driven away, that this morning we may behold Thee and rejoice in Thee, feel Thy life and find warmth in Thee. This is our privilege and Thy gift. Behold our weakness, and help us to such strength as is needed. May all holy thoughts go forth ascending; and before Thee may our poor sacrifice — the best that we can offer, and yet poor — be acceptable to Thee, not for its sake, but for the sake of the love which Thou bearest towards us, Thy children, and for Thine own name's sake. *Amen.*

My voice shalt Thou hear in the morning, O Lord: in the morning will I direct my prayer unto Thee, and will look up.
*Ps. v. 3.*

ANOTHER night has passed. Thou hast watched over me during my sleep. I live, I exist, I witness once more the wonders of Thy crea-

tion. My first thought shall be of Thee, O Lord! my first word, one of gratitude. How can I thank Thee, Supreme Father, source of all goodness? How can my weak tongue express my thanksgivings for surrounding me once more with all those dear to me? Thou hast watched over them during the terrors of the night, and hast preserved them in safety. The Guardian of Israel neither slumbereth nor sleepeth. How bountiful art Thou, O God! in bestowing so many benefits on man!

Alas! often have I been ungrateful for Thy mercies! often have I rebelled against Thy commands. Faith has not always been my light, hope my consolation, nor love the source of my actions. Instead of aspiring to do good, I have cherished sentiments of vanity and pride. How often have I turned away from the humble and unfortunate to follow the powerful and happy of this world! How many days have been spent to my own hurt and lost to my salvation!

O Heavenly Father! I sincerely desire to walk in Thy ways, to obey Thy commands, to succor the poor, to console the unfortunate, and to love all mankind. Aid me in my endeavors; O shield my

heart from evil passions and all sinful weakness. Make me humble in myself, charitable towards my neighbor, and cause me to rejoice in his happiness. Aid me, for Thou art the help of the weak ; support me, O Lord ! in my struggle against evil, as Thou didst sustain our Father Jacob when he wrestled with the angel.

Watch over me, O Father ! and make me worthy of Thy mercy. *Amen.*

No one is desolate as long as there is a human being for whom it can feel trust and reverence. GEORGE ELIOT.

AGAIN the morning light has come and again our eyes behold the beauty of the world and the familiar scenes with which our affections are engaged, and the faces of the friends we love. Once more we would be glad for this daily miracle of sleep which gives refreshment to our wasted strength and enables us to take up again the heavy burden and enjoy the pleasant road. May the sweet confidence with which we nightly trust ourselves to this mysterious realm be to us an omen and encouragement : with as sweet a confidence may we trust ourselves to that sleep which rounds our mortal life.

Even more glad than of this morning light which renews for us the familiar aspect of the world we would be glad of that inner light of truth and goodness which shines in our hearts, and which has shone in the lives of holy men and women innumerable, in whose faces we have seen the eternal, whose spiritual strength has been the quickening of our own. May the high sense of our kinship with these generous and noble spirits be with us during the coming day, especially if at any time we are tempted to fall away from what we know is right and good. May not the day go by and leave undone what we may do to help our friends to bear their burdens and to cheer them in their loss and pain. May not its shining hours rebuke the dullness of our minds, the slowness of our hearts, the torpor of our wills. To their celestial music may we make some sure advance upon that City of God which is the goal of our desire, that life which knows the law of the Eternal and obeys the law it knows. *Amen.*

Look inwards, for you have a lasting fountain of happiness at home that will always bubble up if you will but dig for it. MARCUS AURELIUS.

O LORD God, our heavenly Father, help us to praise Thee for the new mercies of another day; for Thy kind and loving care over us; for Thy patience with our infirmity; for Thy merciful forgiveness of all our sin. Be with us in all the changes and chances of this mortal life, so that trouble may never overtake us unprepared, nor temptation assail us undefended by Thy grace. May we so live rejoicing in Thee, that our several duties may be cheerfully and faithfully done, that we may be a real help and comfort to one another, bearing each other's burdens, and making the path of life less difficult and sad. May we never forget that we are all Thy dear children, and that it is our highest bliss to love Thee with all our hearts, and love each other as ourselves. Heavenly Father, we pray Thee to make our lives happy, notwithstanding all our trials, and our little or great difficulties. Grant us Thy peace which passeth all understanding, and which will keep us wise and steadfast in prosperity and will bear us up in the worst time of adversity. Graciously receive, O Lord, these our

prayers and praises, and let the blessings we have asked for ourselves fall bountifully over all mankind to the honor and glory of Thy name. *Amen.*

Whene'er a noble deed is wrought,
Whene'er is spoken a noble thought,
Our hearts in glad surprise
To higher levels rise.

HENRY W. LONGFELLOW.

ALMIGHTY God and Father! I thank Thee that Thou hast been my guardian and shield during the hours of the past night, and hast permitted me to wake again in health and strength to behold another day in joy and repose. Standing before Thee in prayer, I entreat Thee to aid me in approaching Thee with gratitude, humility and sincere repentance. O banish from my mind all worldly thoughts and feelings that I may address Thee in sincerity and with a pure, undivided spirit. Merciful Father! with heartfelt gratitude I acknowledge the blessings received at Thy hand during the past night, and confess my unworthiness of them. Thou knowest my heart, Thou art acquainted with my secret thoughts and actions, and it is manifest to Thee that I deserve not Thy mercy. I have been indifferent to duty and un-

grateful to Thee; I have been forgetful of Thy goodness and followed too much the desires of my own heart; I have done those things which are displeasing in Thy sight and left undone those things Thou wouldst have me do. I deserve Thy displeasure and not Thy favor; but Thou art eternally good and ever ready to pardon and forgive. O Lord! "create in me a clean heart and a right spirit renew Thou within me." Aid me to search my heart, to know and confess my sins and depart from them, that each day may find me more worthy in Thy sight.

May it please Thee, O God, to send Thy blessing with me during the coming hours; suffer neither trouble nor pain nor bereavement to darken my home; send joy and plenty, health and prosperity to me and mine. But if it be Thy will that sorrow should visit me, O do Thou in Thy mercy strengthen and encourage me, that I may bow with pious and humble submission to all Thy dispensations. Pour out Thy spirit upon me that I may be prepared to receive what Thou sendest as best and kindest, though it may appear severe. Dispose my heart to Thy will, to be satisfied with my lot and grateful for every blessing. Send me Thy aid, O

God, in the duties of the coming day, guard and guide me by Thy spirit against every form of temptation, and in all things teach me Thy will be done. Confiding in Thy goodness and Thy ever-present help, I commit my life and destiny in Thy hand. O make me worthy of all Thy goodness and may all the various duties to which I am called be performed in that manner most acceptable to Thee.

Hear, O God, and answer me in mercy. *Amen.*

Failure after long perseverance is much grander than never to have a striving good enough to be called a failure.

GEORGE ELIOT.

O GOD and Father, Source of life and of blessing, unto Thee my heart is lifted up in adoration, unto Thee are my eyes directed in the opening hour of this new day. Thou sleepest not, Thou slumberest not, O Guardian of Israel. Thine eye has watched over me, Thy protecting hand has shielded me through the dangers of the night. Thy goodness, which is without end, has given me the refreshing quiet of sleep and has quickened me with the energy of new life. Thy love, which

is new every morning, has granted me the joy of beholding once more the earth and its beauty, and seeing again the faces of my loved ones gladdened with the blessings of health.

O, how should my soul fail to praise Thee, seeing all Thy bounties so freshly given? In the chorus of the thousands of Thy creatures who lift up their grateful voices from the hour of dawn, let also the thanksgiving of my heart find a perfect accord.

Grant that this day which I receive as a gift from Thee, shall not pass over me in vain. May it be dedicated to Thy glory, to the improvement of my soul, to the service of my fellow-men. Let this day not prove an empty page in the record of my life. O help me to accomplish something worthy of Thy love, something that shall in the sphere of my daily doings further the wise and holy purposes for which Thou hast placed man on earth.

In humility let me walk before Thee, O God, my heart composed through reverence and love to trust steadfastly in the wisdom and goodness of Thine all-ruling will. *Amen.*

God works in all things; all obey
His first propulsion from the night:
Wake thou and watch!—the world is gray
With morning light.

JOHN G. WHITTIER.

O THOU who art the light of all our days, we come to Thee, that Thou mayst rise upon our longing hearts, and fill us with the strength of joy in Thee. Father, for all the gladness of our life we bless Thee; for beauty wrought into our hearts amid the silence of the hills or beneath the tranquil sky; for happiness unspeakable even amid the fellowship of sorrow in our homes; for the surprises of tenderness with which Thou dost shed on us some unexpected joy; for the widening range of knowledge and all the hope of nobler truth; for quickening impulses of reverence and sympathy borne in upon us by some prophet's word, — for these amid the multitude of Thy unnamed mercies, would we pour out our souls in thankfulness and awe. Yea, in the greatness of Thy love Thou art not weary of us, who have stumbled and fallen, and have scarce dared, or even have not wished, to lift up our faces to Thee. Quicken within us, we beseech Thee, the sense that Thou art ever nigh,

ready to make Thy strength our strength, and gird our weakness with Thy might. *Amen.*

It is easy enough to speak of the love of God while it costs no sacrifices; but, when the soul is sorely tried by the sacrifice demanded of us, *then* is the time to prove our faith.

*Select Sentences.*

O ETERNAL God, as my eyes open to the light of another day, I am grateful for Thy loving care of the night. Thy guardianship was over my house, and by Thy grace am I permitted again to look upon the faces of my dear ones, and with renewed strength to take up my daily duties. May it be Thy will that this day be one of joy and happiness to me, in that I may have the sweet reward of conscience in its approval, knowing that I have done Thy will.

Make me strong in all that is good, brave to do the right. Let me curb the hasty tongue, hold back the impatient word and the untrue speech. Let me not show unkindness to my dear ones in the home, or discourtesy to the stranger, but bear myself all the day as a loving friend and a just neighbor. Let me especially so carry myself that I may bring honor to my beloved faith. Let me therefore

be strong to resist the temptations of dishonesty, of untruth, and of injustice, of false word or ignoble deed, where they may seem to lead to my advantage. Inspired by the knowledge of Thy all-perfecting love, let me scorn the unworthy thought and action. *Amen.*

Do the Duty which lies nearest Thee, which thou knowest to be a Duty! Thy second Duty will already have become clearer. THOMAS CARLYLE.

THE less we feel the need of Thy mercy, the more we need it. And so, first of all, we ask this of Thee, Father, that Thou wilt awaken in us the consciousness of our need; that we may know wherein we have left undone the things we ought to have done; that we may know wherein we have done the things that we ought not to have done; that we may know wherein we lack the perfect health and perfect holiness. So as patients to a physician, so as children to a father, we come, seeking most of all that we may have the contrite heart in which Thou dost delight to dwell; and let Thy mercy be upon us, not according to our sense of our need, but according to Thy perception of it.

Forgive our sins; blot out of the book of Thy

remembrance the wrongs that we have done, the failures we have made; summon us to Thee, that from Thee we may receive the inspiration for a better and a higher life. Teach us the lessons of our own mistakes; help us to understand what lessons life has for us; may we accept them in humility,—yea, and in gladness. Keep us from blunders, from repeating past mistakes, and going on, dull, stupid, prejudiced, continuing to make the errors which Thou by Thy providence dost point out to us.

Come with Thy gracious compassion to us in our sorrows; comfort those that mourn; and strengthen those that are brought into difficulty of any kind. Help us to understand the meaning of these two so misused words, "failure" and "success"; help us to understand that we never succeed except when we succeed in maintaining honor, truth, righteousness, purity, and when we do, we do not fail. Help us to bear the cares and perplexities of life, its terrestrial burdens, help us to bear them bravely, as becomes the sons of God. Let us not think too much of wealth and comfort for ourselves or for others. Let love have a higher mission than this; love, a wiser vision. Keep us from the folly of trying to keep all burdens from our

children; make us love them with Thy strong love, that they may bear Thy burdens; neither seeking for them occasions of self-sacrifice nor seeking to relieve them from all self-sacrifice, but teaching them how to live in the life to which Thou dost summon them. Bind us in the family closer together; take out the friction; take away the selfishness out of which affliction comes; make us more sympathetic; help us to understand one another better, and to trust one another when we cannot understand. Let Thy mercy show itself to us in all the experiences of our perplexity. Let us not think that Thou hast mercy toward those that think rightly and none toward those that think wrongly. Let us not think we cannot have Thy mercy unless we believe rightly concerning Thee. Let us remember that Thy compassion is toward the ignorant and the unseeing as well as toward those that see, and perhaps least of all toward those who think they see. So if any do but half perceive the higher realm of truth, and walk as those that are blind, lead them, and lead them on toward the light; but whether toward the light or not, lead them at all events in paths of righteousness, for Thy name's sake.

Bless the young; keep them from irretrievable

mistakes; keep them from cowardice; keep them from abandonment of principle; keep them by the sacred memory of their homes and the loved ones that are praying for them and caring for them. Bless the middle-aged and make them strong in life's bounty, and wise exemplars unto others. Bless those that draw near to the boundary-line and look back upon the most of this life as spent, and fill their age with good, and renew their youth like the eagle's, and let their last peaceful hours be the best and the noblest of all.

Bless our country; this great, strange country, with its curious population, its intermixture of good and evil, its faith and scepticism, its heroism and cowardice, its love of peace and its love of war. O Lord our God, make the hearts of Thy people strong in this land; let it be Thy land, and this nation Thy nation, seeking purity, truth, liberty, the kingdom of God. Beat back superstition, ignorance, corruption; beat back that sin most fatal of all—indifference and unconcern; and make the nation a Kingdom of Priests unto Thee.

Bless all Thy worshipping people everywhere, hear their prayers, inspire their songs, and quicken their lives. *Amen.*

Do not leave the sky out of your landscape.

RALPH WALDO EMERSON.

BLESSED art Thou, O gracious and ever blessed God, who hast ordained another day should dawn in joy for me; blessed art Thou, who in Thy great mercy hast ordained that I should wake in health and strength from the terrors of the dark and silent night.

Thy shield was around me, Thy arm sustained me; even in sleep Thou wilt not forsake me—Thou withdrawest not Thine arm from me lest I sleep in death. Thou hast recalled my flitting soul, and I wake, and rise, and move, and think, and my soul would praise Thee, O my God, but it knows not how. The sun shines forth in its splendor, and deluging all things with its flood of brilliant light proclaims the majesty of God. The little birds have raised their carol, and their voices sing to the praises of their beneficent Maker, but I know not how to utter forth the praises of our Father! my lips are mute, I look forth on all speaking nature, and my heart proclaims Thy power, and my soul is filled with gratitude and love, but words are lost, my lips refuse their office, though my glowing heart is lifted up to Thee. How can I

praise Thee, O God, according to Thy works! How can I speak my grateful thanks for Thy never-ceasing goodness! O teach me to walk in the ways of my God, that I may come nigh Thy footstool. O lead me in the path of righteousness, that my soul may utter forth Thy praises, that my lips may speak my gratitude and love. Blessed art Thou, O God of Heaven and Earth; blessed be Thy great name for evermore. *Amen.*

All mankind are sooner or later the better for the secret prayers and strivings after holiness of every truly religious soul. CHARLES VOYSEY.

AGAIN with morning's light, we seek Thy face, O Father of Mercy and Love, and would fain lay hold of Thy hand to keep us lest we go astray, to help us when we stumble, and to lift us up when we fall. Graciously teach us to feel deeply the truths which we profess to believe, and to frame our whole lives by the good rules and principles which we know to be right. Let not religion become to us a mere phrase on the lips, or a habit to put on, but a living power to uphold us in all duty, and a defense against all temptation.

In the duties of this day do Thou help and

strengthen us; in its dangers protect and calm us; in its difficulties guide and enlighten us; in its temptations, O God, by Thy grace, defend us; in its joys let our hearts be lifted up to Thee in purity and in praise; and in its sorrows be Thou our Comforter and Friend.

The longer we live, help us to live closer to Thee, obedient in thought, word and deed, ever loyal to Thy will, and faithful and loving to each other; that our home may be Thy temple, and our hearts Thine altar. *Amen.*

There are many people that have storms, but there are very few who know how to put rainbows over them.

HENRY WARD BEECHER.

I THANK Thee, Heavenly Father, for being permitted to see the light of another day, for the privilege of awakening in health with a feeling of delight in beholding Thy wondrous works in the beauties of nature surrounding me. I bless Thee, Father, for Thy loving care and protection during the night gone by, and for the refreshing slumber which so strengthens and sustains me that I may be able to perform the duties assigned me in a manner acceptable to Thee. Dear Lord, I feel

and know my unworthiness, yet do I pray Thee to continue Thy loving-kindness and inspire me with courage and faith, that I yield not to weakness or temptation in whatever form it may be presented; and should sorrow or trial again enter my life, be Thou ever near, and help me to accept it with courage and resignation, having the consolation of Thy never-failing love and mercy.

Aid me in my endeavors to brighten the lives of those around me, and grant that the close of each day may find me nearer to Thee in thought and deed. *Amen.*

God's stintless joy goes round, goes round;
No soul that dwelleth so apart
It may not feel the circling pulse
Outwelling from the eternal heart.

A. D. T. WHITNEY.

THOU, God, infinite in fullness of love and mercy and all helpfulness, look graciously upon us. We are less in Thy sight than are the humblest flowers that lift themselves up this morning under the sun. As compared with the greatness of its warmth and life what are they! And what is our littleness before Thee! Thou hast brought us

forth, O Lord our God, in our helplessness; and Thou art standing above and over against all want and littleness with infinite supply. We came not to Thy fear nor to Thy wrath, but to Thy goodness and to Thy mercy, and we say, Our Father, look compassionately and in love upon us, and give us this day the bread that we need, as for the body so for the soul. And lead us out of all ways of sin and temptation up into the way where Thou art, that we may be able to say, Hallowed be Thy name, and rejoice in Thee, and find all other joys heightened by this supreme joy. Grant this blessing to the hour, to the day, and to the year, until this life mingles with the higher, when we will praise Thee with voice and thoughts and affections not permitted to the earth. *Amen.*

Love not Pleasure; love God. This is the everlasting *Yea*, wherein all contradiction is solved; wherein whoso walks and works, it is well with him. THOMAS CARLYLE.

O THOU infinite One, who art in heaven and on earth, and near unto every heart, we worship Thee with all our mind and all our soul. We reverence Thee, who art the permanent in things that change, the foundation of what lasts; the wisdom

and the justice that hold and bless this world of matter and of men. We remember before Thee our several wants and conditions of life, and we thank Thee for the happiness that crowns our days, for the success that attends our efforts in our various spheres of activity, for the brightness we gather in our homes, and the love wherein our hearts rejoice. But we remember also in our prayer the sorrows that stain our face with weeping, and fill our souls with sadness and distress. We thank Thee that we know Thine eye pities us in our sorrows; and that Thy chastenings are meant for good and not for evil. Help us to grow stronger and nobler by this world's changes, and to enlarge our spiritual being by the various events of our mortal life. May we see Thy hand in all that comes upon us, and may that faith endow us with the strength of patience and the comfort of hope. *Amen.*

# EVENING

There is one kind of wisdom which we learn from the world, and another kind which can be acquired in solitude only. HENRY W. LONGFELLOW.

TO Thee, my God, let my last waking thoughts be dedicated, e'en as to Thee I offered my praise when I awoke this day. I thank Thee for the care that hath watched over me. I cannot tell what evils might have befallen hadst Thou not stood guard over me; but what I know of Thy ceaseless love and wise guidance in Thy universe reveals to me my constant debt to Thine unfailing guardianship. Thou lovest all Thy creatures, and hast planned safely for them and security from countless ills which ignorance creates and heedlessness fosters. Over all my dear ones, Father, hold that same protecting Hand; shield them from the

consequences of thoughtlessness and lack of prudence, their own or others'. Especially in the veil of darkness now o'erspreading this portion of Thy beautiful world, hold far from us all mischance and all evil, all terror and anxiety.

Send fruition unto all that I have planned today, for without Thy blessing we toil in vain. Cause me to see my errors, errors of judgment and errors of temperament; and let my fellow-men see that my motives are upright and my intentions good. Let those whom I may have offended understand that I mean no ill; may those who feel themselves aggrieved by me permit me to know the fact of their estrangement, that no unexplained misunderstanding or fancied slight diminish our friendly intercourse.

Grant me to rest now and find refreshment to my powers. Grant me the wisdom to use my health wisely, that without undue suffering and pain I may round out my years, endeavoring to serve Thee faithfully, and my fellow-men lovingly.

Let all beneath this dwelling repose peacefully and contentedly, satisfied that Thou, Guardian of Israel, slumberest not nor sleepest; Thou wilt guard from every ill. *Amen.*

A man's reach should exceed his grasp,
Or what 's a heaven for?

ROBERT BROWNING.

DEAR Father, our lives are hid in Thee; we live and move and have our being in Thee; and by as much as we are in conscious sympathy with Thee by so much is our life enlarged and deepened and heightened and made grand and strong. We ask then that at this evening hour we may come into conscious association with Thee.

We know Thou art everywhere; we know Thou canst be found in the street or in the wood; but there is help, there is the generation of increased moral and spiritual force in coming together in Thy name, and in helping one another we do help ourselves most of all. And we know that in places with which are associated fine and sweet and true feelings and aspirations in the past we find it easier to kindle them afresh. So let us worship Thee and let us feel that we are in Thy presence and that Thou dost love us and care for us; for Thou art readier to help us than we are to be helped. It is not Thou who art at fault; we are not willing to take the best and highest things Thou wouldst come pouring into our hearts and lives if we were

but ready for them. Thou canst not break in by force; Thou canst not compel us to accept noble and sweet and tender feelings and high ideals and lofty purposes; it must be as sunshine working upon the grasses and the flowers, opening them, persuading them to lift up their little chalices and receive the beneficence of Heaven. So it must be Thy tender and gentle Spirit working upon us and inclining us to open our hearts to Thine incoming.

Let us consecrate ourselves to noble living. As we look back over the past and find so many things for which to be grateful, let us know that Thou dost not care to have us expend our gratitude in words alone, but that true gratitude finds utterance in deeds, and so serve our time and the coming time better as we remember what Thou hast done for us in the past. And in view of the deliverance that has come to us as a country let us know that it is the Lord that hath done it,—not the Lord outside of humanity, but the God working in and through the thoughts and the love and the hopes and the consecrations of His children; and so let us thank Thee for the new hope that thrills us this night, and let us be worthy of Thy great gift and prove ourselves worthy by consecrating ourselves

to Thy service for the days that are to come. Are there any of us in special trouble, hearts burdened, eyes that have been dimmed with tears, nerves unnerved, let us know that in Thee is resource, in Thee is courage; and if the burden must still press on us for a while, let us at least learn patience, let us learn to wait, let us learn to build up that nobility of character that comes through a burdened soul. Then let us be ready for the sunshine that must come, because sunshine is more than all shadow, and there would be no shadow but for the sunshine. Life is more than death, warmth more than cold, good more than evil, God all and in all. And to Thee our Father, we give ourselves and offer our thanks now and evermore. *Amen.*

The life of man consists not in seeing visions and in dreaming dreams, but in active charity and willing service.

HENRY W. LONGFELLOW.

O GOD who art the strength of all that trust in Thee, my soul is filled with gratitude for the numberless blessings Thou bestowest on me. With a father's tender care Thou rememberest me every day and every hour. Thou hast endowed me with reason to distinguish between right and wrong,

with freedom to choose between good and evil. Thou hast opened mine eyes that I may know the wonders of Thy creation and above the fleeting things of the earth seek Thee, O Eternal, who art near to the hearts of the lowly.

Teach me, O Lord, to obey Thy will, to be content with what in Thy wisdom Thou hast allotted to me, and to share Thy gifts with those who need my help. Guide me, O Father, with Thy good counsel, and hold in Thy keeping the lives of those dear to me. Spread the tent of Thy protection over my home; may peace and happiness abide in it, and love unite all who dwell under its shadow. And when in Thy wisdom, Thou sendest trials and sorrows, O grant me strength to bear them patiently, and courage to trust in Thy help. Guard Thou my going out and coming in, now and evermore.

May the words of my mouth and the meditations of my heart be acceptable before Thee, O Lord my strength and my Redeemer. *Amen.*

Life hath no blessing like an earnest friend ; than treasured wealth more precious, than the power of monarchs, and the people's loud applause. EURIPIDES.

MOST merciful Father, at the close of this day we desire to draw near to Thee in praise and thanksgiving for all the goodness and loving-kindness Thou hast bestowed upon us. We thank Thee for all the health and strength we have enjoyed, for every duty we have been able to discharge, for every benefit or comfort we have been able to confer.

We thank Thee for all our rest and for all our pleasure, for the air and sunshine and the beauty of Thy works around us.

We thank Thee for all the friendliness and kind service of others, by which our path of life has been made easier. We thank Thee for the tender love of our nearest and dearest, which makes music in our souls even in hours of sadness.

And we thank Thee, Lord, for all our difficulties, trials and failures, knowing that these also are the tokens of Thy faithful love and the discipline we need for our soul's health.

May all our thankfulness to Thee lead us to strive daily to be more worthy of Thy goodness, and better to deserve Thy fatherly love. *Amen.*

By inward sense, by outward signs,
God's presence still the heart divines;
Through deepest joy of Him we learn,
In sorest grief to Him we turn,
And reason stoops its pride to share
The child-like instinct of a prayer.

JOHN G. WHITTIER.

WE remember at this moment that we cannot hide anything from Thee, O God, and we remember also that in telling Thee all things, we tell them to our Father. We know that Thou art just, but we know also that Thou hast revealed Thyself as merciful. We know that Thou art our Judge in all things, and yet it has been told us that our Judge will remember when He makes up His verdict that we are dust and that our tendencies are toward evil. We thank Thee that Thou hast made Thyself known to us as one who understands our weaknesses and who pities us in our forlornness and helplessness; that Thou hast told us that Thou wilt stretch Thine hand out to us and lift us up if we will stretch our hands out and take hold of Thee.

Father, it seems very strange to us when we remember all the good things Thou hast done for us and all the holy things Thou hast said to us that

there should be so much estrangement between us and Thee; that we should be so far off from Thee; that we should think of Thee so constantly and so persistently as a vague and unreal dream, and not the one divine reality in our poor lives. The world is like a tide that sweeps against us, and the temptations of life are like the network for our feet, in which we are too often entrapped.

We come, therefore, to Thee that we may confess ourselves before Thee, acknowledging our own unworthiness and shortcomings, and beseeching Thee to have mercy upon us with loving-kindness still.

Father, we have to thank Thee that we are alive at this moment. Others have been taken away, but we remain. Others have passed under the veil and have solved the great mystery of death, but we are left a little while amid the happiness and the sunshine and the troubles of this present time. Others have been stretched on beds of illness, and friends have prayed for them with heavy hearts, while we enjoy a large degree of health. Nevertheless, we have failed to be sufficiently thankful for these things. Many are the gifts which we have received and for which we have not been grateful. We have not kindly remembered Thee because of

Thy forgiving love, nor shown any gratitude because of that mercy which has covered our sins as with a mantle, but have gone forth into the world to commit other sins and to yield still further to temptation. We are exceedingly weak; we are strangely remiss. We seem to ourselves to be a bundle of contradictions; and although we desire to love Thee and to live near Thee, yet we do not love, neither are we very close to Thee.

Father! the temptations which surround one who is engaged in the active business of this life Thou knowest are very strong and very strange. Life is a wonderful mystery to us and sometimes it is a great trial to us, but if we call upon Thee for help, and if, when we are downcast and despondent, we look not upon men but upon God, then our eyes shall be lightened and our lips shall be touched with a smile. O Father! there are some sad lessons which we must yet learn, but we do pray Thee to so proportion our faith to our forlorn condition that we shall learn the lessons quickly, and trust implicitly and sweetly in Thy gentle providence.

Lead us in the way by Thine own right hand and by Thine own might. Protect us from all the enemies that surround us and lead us astray.

Grant unto us Thy security and protection and let us feel assured that in Thee alone we can find safety and comfort.

Bless those of us who are sin-sick and tired of this world. There are many who have been strangely buffeted; there are those who have been scoffed at by the wrath of men; there are those who have been tired and troubled in their innermost souls by the ingratitude of their friends; there are those who have almost lost their faith in God because they have lost their faith in their fellowmen. Wilt Thou so richly bless us that we shall forget all the ingratitude of the world, all its trials and troubles, and remember only this, that God is answerable for us if we trust in His great and holy name; that God will see to it that we reach the end of the journey in safety. No matter how thick the clouds may be, no matter how madly the storm may howl above us, yet He will be with us in the midst of the trouble and lead us safely to Himself at last. Father in Heaven! bless all of us who are exceedingly happy; and if there are any who have had bereavement, who are suffering from broken affections, wilt Thou lead them to think of that other home where those who have parted will be

re-united, and where there shall be no more tears, and no more sadness, and no more sorrow. O Father! may such sing in their hearts: "Heaven is my home."

So may we do all to Thy glory, and may everything that shall be said be to Thy praise, and to Thine alone. *Amen.*

All through life there are wayside inns, where man may
refresh his soul with love;
Even the lowest may quench his thirst at rivulets fed by
springs from above.

HENRY W. LONGFELLOW.

WE come into Thy presence, O Lord, our God, to commune with Thee, to lift up our souls above worldly cares and worldly interests. We come to seek light from Thy light, wisdom from Thy wisdom, and strength and comfort from our firm trust in Thy love, justice and mercy. When we fail because of our ignorance teach us, O God, and guide our footsteps aright. When our weakness and infirmities master and enslave us, strengthen Thou, O God, our will and our resolutions for the betterment of our lives. Give us purer hearts, nobler minds, and grander characters. Teach us to emulate the great men whom Thou in every age sendest

to us as examples of righteousness. Bless our nation with representative men of integrity. Let our country's leaders ever be imbued with the true spirit of loyalty to truth and virtue. May they ever recognize Thy providential hand guiding the destinies of nations.

Bless all men with a true understanding of Thy sacred law of right. Break down the barriers that separate men from one another. Let all fanaticism be eradicated. Let the scepter of liberty rule over the earth.

O our Father, we ask Thee to lift the burden from the afflicted soul, dry the tears of the unfortunate, turn sorrow into happiness, weeping into smiling, mourning into rejoicing. Lift the clouds from their sad lives, and let the pure rays of heavenly bliss enter their souls. Let them sing because their cup of joy is filled; let them sound Thy praises in gladness and cheerfulness. Bless, O my soul, the Lord. *Amen.*

Those love truth best who to themselves are true,
And what they dare to dream of, dare to do.

JAMES RUSSELL LOWELL.

WE thank Thee, O God, for the still and silent joys that come to every earnest and holy

heart. We thank Thee for the happiness that attends the work of our hands, and that, while we are laboring for our daily bread, Thou givest us the bread of life which perisheth not. May we make a faithful use of every good gift that cometh down to us from above; and may we think on the things that are true and right, holy, fair, and good, till we love them, and in them love Thee, with all our heart and soul and mind. May we have strength for every day's duty, patience to bear every trial, and wisdom to order our pathway aright; and in all the brightness Thou sheddest on our way, and in all the joy and strength of our lives, may we ever feel Thy hand laid upon us, and the might of Thy Spirit sustaining us. *Amen.*

If we live truly, we shall see truly. . . . When a man lives with God, his voice shall be as sweet as the murmur of the brook and the rustle of the corn.

RALPH WALDO EMERSON.

COMFORT us, Almighty Father, with Thine own inspiration and Thine own presence, that we may know that we are with Thee, and Thou with us, that we have Thy strength for our weakness, Thy

light in our discouragement borne to us, and we Thy children will strive to enter into Thy work and go about our Father's business. Show us to-morrow and in these new days how we can go forward to live to Thy glory, to be strong in Thy strength, to help those who are around us, because God reveals Himself to us in our daily lives.

If we could see Thee as the pure in heart see Thee! If we could know how large life is! That is what we ask for, Father, that we may not be bound down by the things of earth or of time or of the flesh, but that we may live, even now at this moment, as eternal beings, as infinite, immortal beings, and enter into Thy purpose. *Amen.*

I laid me down and slept; I awaked: for the Lord sustained me. *Ps. iii. 5.*

THE close of another day is at hand, and I, Thy loving child, approach Thee, Father, in thankfulness and praise. I feel Thou hast been near to me during the passing hours, and thank Thee for Thy loving care; and now, Heavenly Father, in the darkness of the night when I lay me down to rest, in grateful humility I pray Thee to extend Thy blessing over this household, and grant that the

night may be passed in restfulness and security, knowing Thy watchful care surrounds us. Permit us to awake the coming morn refreshed in mind and body, with strength and health renewed, prepared to undertake our duties in life with gladsome hearts and willing hands.

Father, I rest secure, for Thou art with me. *Amen.*

A sacred burden is this life ye bear:
Look on it, lift it, bear it solemnly,
Stand up and walk beneath it steadfastly.
Fail not for sorrow, falter not for sin,
But onward, upward, till the goal ye win.

FRANCES ANNE KEMBLE.

O ALMIGHTY and merciful Father, we Thy children need Thy loving hand to guide our steps in the toilsome and tangled path of life. It is so hard for us to believe that our own special troubles and temptations are exactly what we ought to have to make us what we ought to be in Thy sight. Thou knowest how we have murmured against Thy good providence and have complained of our hardships, as though none of them had been ordered by Thee for our discipline and for our good. Each of us wants to be rid of some burden that Thy fatherly

hand has laid upon him. Each of us longs to be free from some special difficulties of daily experience. Our self-will would mold every person and every thing to our own taste and requirements, but this is not Thy law. Merciful God, open our eyes to see that if we would make the world to give us happiness, we must make ourselves to suit the world. If we would gain the full and entire love and service of others, we must first fully and entirely love and serve them. If we want to be reconciled to our lot, however trying, we must bend ourselves to it as coming from Thee to chasten and perfect our souls. The way of life is sometimes hard, but nothing is too hard for the Lord; and to Thee we look for strength who art our refuge and our most merciful God. *Amen.*

They are never alone that are accompanied with noble thoughts. PHILIP SIDNEY.

UNTO Thee do I come in the calmness of this hour when the earth is wrapped in the stillness of night, to speak Thy holy name as the day passes into eternity. With grateful heart I give thanks unto Thee, O God, for all that this day has brought me, the treasures of joy, of earnest effort,

of sweet affection, of uplifting hope, and the fulfillment of duty.

O God, how shall I acknowledge Thy goodness or give thanks to Thee for all that I owe Thee? Thou hast given me life, and surrounded me with all that makes life a blessing. Thou hast delivered me from many evils, and Thou continuest daily to shower Thy mercies upon me. What return can I make for all Thy benefits, and for the special favors of this day? Grant that by my deeds I may bestow the praise which is agreeable in Thy sight, who art so bountiful to Thy servant. Strengthen me, O God, that I may love Thee with all my heart, with all my soul, and with all my might, that I may love all my fellow-men as Thy children.

I forgive all who have injured me, and would ask pardon of all whom I have injured.

Guard, I beseech Thee, O God, this home, and keep from it all that is evil. Let Thy peace dwell therein, and may Thy blessing be upon us forever. *Amen.*

Prayer will in time make the human countenance its own divinest altar. JAMES LANE ALLEN.

O THOU infinite One, we flee unto Thee, and for a moment would be penetrated with the

thought of Thy presence, and so worship Thee in the uplifting of our hearts that we may serve Thee with our hands all the days of our mortal lives.

We thank Thee for Thy loving-kindness and Thy tender mercy, which are new every morning and fresh every evening, and which fail not at noonday. We thank Thee for the world that is about us and above us and beneath us, full of Thy presence in every star of heaven and every flower of earth. We bless Thee for the other world which ourselves are, whereto this sphere of matter is but outward resting-place and environment, and we thank Thee that our souls are likewise the temple of Thy spirit, and thou it is who givest us life and breath and all things richly to enjoy. We thank Thee that Thou hast created us from perfect love, and watchest over us with such causal providence that Thou makest all things work together for good, and wilt lose no child of perdition from Thy mighty human flock, but wilt lead Thy children by the hand, and those who cannot walk Thou wilt bear in Thine arms, and bring them all at last to never-ending bliss. O Thou who art Perfect Love, we thank Thee for Thyself, and sure of Thine infinite loving-kindness and Thy tender mercy, we know

that we cannot fail, and having Thee, all else needful are we sure of beside.

We thank Thee for the glorious nature which Thou hast given us, that Thou hast blessed us with such large faculties to know what is useful and beautiful and true, to understand what is just and right before Thine eyes; and with this affection, whereby we love each other and are joined by manifold tender ties to those who are dear to us, however far remote in time and space. We thank Thee for this great and overmastering power whereby we know Thee and commune with Thee, Thy spirit inspiring our spirit, and Thy providence upholding us when we totter and uplifting us when we fall. Father, we thank Thee for all these things, and our words know not how to praise Thee as our hearts so gladly would, but we know that Thou needest no words from our heart, no psalm from our lips, for Thou understandest us, knowing the words of our mouth before they are conceived in our hearts.

We thank Thee for all manner of blessings which Thou givest us. We bless Thee for the things needful to the body, for our health and our strength, our bread by day, our nightly sleep, and

the work which our hands find to do whereby our bodies are clothed with raiment and our mouths are satisfied with bread. We thank Thee for the instruction which comes to mind and to conscience from our daily toil. We bless Thee for those who are near to our heart, whether by our side or far removed, or separated even by the gates of death. We thank Thee for the ascended spirits that were once with us on earth, lifting their eyes upon the sun, taking sweet counsel with us, and walking to Thine house in company. We bless Thee for all good and noble men and women, who from time to time come up in Thy providence to teach nations the way in which they should walk and to call many from wickedness to the ways of justice, which lead to such blessedness on earth and beyond the world. We thank Thee for ages past, for the childhood of mankind, and for any words of simplicity and truth which have come down to us from ancient days. We thank Thee for the primal virtues which shine aloft as stars, and not less for the charities which heal and soothe and bless, and are scattered at man's living feet like flowers. We bless Thee for the great truths which have come down to us on their sounding way through the ages,

encouraging and strengthening men. We thank Thee for poets and prophets and mighty men of thought and of piety, who spoke as they were moved by Thine all-wakening spirit, and brought truth to mankind; and we thank Thee that in our own day, not less, Thy spirit still works with the children of men, O Thou, who art the head, and dost every joint supply, and art always present in the world of matter and the world of man.

We thank Thee for all these things, and we pray Thee that we may strengthen ourselves mightily with Thy spirit in our inner man. May we turn off our eyes from loving evil things, and withhold our hand from every unclean and ungodly work. May we build ourselves up to the measure of a perfect man, growing continually to a higher image and likeness whereafter Thou hast created us. May there be in us such love of Thee, such faith in Thee, and such obedience towards Thee, that we shall keep every law Thou hast written on our bodies or in our souls. Thus may we learn Thy truth, and may it set us free alike from the darkness of old times and the error of our own days. May we learn what is right and do Thy will with all the strength

that is in us, and while we ask Thee to love us, may we love our brothers as we love ourselves, and grow constantly in the practice of every religious duty, and the doing of every manly work. Thus may Thy Kingdom come, and Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven. *Amen.*

We only ask of God what we *think* will be best; but He gives us what He *knows* is best. *Select Sentences.*

ANOTHER day has fled! Another night is at hand, merciful God! How great is the goodness which Thou hast vouchsafed unto me during the past hours! How ungrateful I who have received such mercies undeserved! Lord, when I reflect on those around me who are in pain and distress—the deserted and the bereaved; when I remember those bereft of sight and speech, and the many who are this night without home or shelter, without friends, without bread and without hope, how can I find words to thank Thee sufficiently for all that I enjoy through Thee! Thou hast given me blessings I deserve not and shown me mercies of which I am unworthy. Almighty Father, with heartfelt gratitude I thank Thee and praise Thy name for all

Thou hast bestowed upon me during the past day; for the health I have enjoyed, for the bread I have eaten, and for the raiment I put on; for the comforts of a home and the joys of kindred; for deliverance from temptation, peril, and woe, and for the innumerable blessings flowing from Thy hand. And yet, O God, I have sinned against Thee; I have trespassed in thought, word, and deed; I have been unmindful of Thy goodness and indifferent to my faults; I have faltered in duty and given up to the desires and inclinations of my own heart. Merciful Father! pardon Thou my sins and forgive my shortcomings. Thou knowest my frame, Thou rememberest that I am but dust. Lead me in the way Thou wouldst have me go, and direct my heart and mind to that which is most pleasing to Thee. Teach me, O God, to reflect on Thy goodness and to examine my heart that I may the better appreciate Thy blessings and become more worthy in Thy sight. O Lord, let me feel that, though unworthy, Thy mercies are not withdrawn nor Thy protecting hand withheld from me. Cause me to act and think in sincerity of heart and in fear of Thy name. Cleanse me from sin and impurity and let me ever be mindful of Thy eye which is open to

every secret of the heart. May it be Thy will, O God, to extend Thy blessings to Thy servant, cause the light of Thy countenance to shine within the circle of my home, and banish fear and trouble, sickness and distress from our midst. O cause joy and plenty, peace and prosperity to abide amongst us; let not the clouds of sorrow or bereavement overtake us, but make us happy all our days. Permit me, Lord, to invoke Thy aid and blessing on those near and dear to me; on all who are bound to me by relationship and kindred do Thou, O God, vouchsafe Thy benediction. And unto me Thy servant do Thou show mercy. Guard me from temptation and sin; make me grateful for all Thy goodness, satisfied with my portion and submissive to all Thy decrees. Whatever may befall me let me not weaken in faith or repine and murmur against Thy will, knowing that Thou art a just God, and doest everything for the best. Let Thy protecting arm be around me during the hours of sleep; grant me a peaceful slumber and open my eyes on the morrow that I may again appear before Thee in health and joy.

Hear me, O God, and answer me in mercy. *Amen.*

When the last dawns are fallen on gray,
And all life's toils and ease complete,
They know who work, not they who play,
If rest is sweet.

JOHN ADDINGTON SYMONDS.

O THOU whose glory filleth all things! whose greatness we can never find, but whose presence we would always seek! whose excellency is more than we can know, yet all that we adore! From the confused voices of our life we turn to Thy silent presence: from our dark and bounded sky we issue forth into Thy pure and infinite light. O come, Thou Holy Spirit, we beseech Thee! and even to our dull clay bring Thy sanctity and dwell.

O God! in time past we have not known Thee. Else, how could we ever murmur while Thy providence rules us or neglect any task which Thy law of Duty brings? Lord! we believe: help Thou our unbelief! For we have not faith which worketh by love and fainteth not. Our deepest desire is still unto Thee. But we are weary to think of our fruitless lives, of the rashness of our self-will and the cowardice of our right affections, of our pride in that which perisheth and our slight of things that are eternal. O for a true heart of trust

to offer ourselves up as a living sacrifice! For what are poverty or riches, affliction or gladness, life or death, to them that have Thy constant peace, O Lord?

O Thou, whom all the contrite bless and only the pure in heart can truly know! Fill us with the strength of them that know their weakness and lean ever upon Thee. May the sorrows of our repentance never be unavailing, but lead us to a holy hope, a meek faith, a never-ceasing charity. Expecting nothing for ourselves and utterly trusting Thee, may we be ready to suffer any peril or tribulation that may threaten to hinder our duty and make us ashamed. That we are Thy children, made partakers of Thy spirit and Thine immortality, may we feel to be supreme among our blessings and greater than all our griefs. As Thy ceaseless mercies descend upon our hearts, O may they not fall as dews upon the barren rock, but as the small rain upon the herbage that maketh the pastures glad. And when Thy cloud encompasseth us and Thy mystery maketh us afraid, may we be still, while Thou ordainest darkness; and then use Thy returning light in more earnest duty and more cheerful love.

O Spirit of Grace, who withholdest Thy blessing from none! take from us the tediousness and anxiety of a selfish mind, the unfruitfulness of cold affections, the weakness of an inconstant will. With the simplicity of a great purpose, the quiet of a meek temper, and the power of a well-ordered soul, may we pass through the toils and watches of our pilgrimage; grateful for all that may render the burden of duty light; and even in strong trouble rejoicing to be deemed worthy of the severer service of Thy will. *Amen.*

God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble. The Lord of hosts is with us; the God of Jacob is our refuge. *Ps. xlvi. 1, 2.*

WE thank Thee for Thy help during this day that has now passed. We confide ourselves and our loved ones to Thy love and protection during this night.

We seek Thy blessing on our labors and humbly pray that Thy fear may always be before our eyes. O turn Thou the hearts of all to Thee, that all may know that Thou art the Power in human life, and that happiness comes to those who live for Thee, in Thee, and by Thy word. *Amen.*

Beyond this vale of tears
There is a life above,
Unmeasured by the flight of years;
And all that life is love.

JAMES MONTGOMERY.

ALMIGHTY and most merciful One, who dost forestall our every want and, when the day is done, givest to Thy beloved sleep; we would lay ourselves down to rest, thinking only of Thy great mercies and abiding love, longing only for newness of life to serve Thee better than we have done before. Let all our successes and our gains in knowledge or wisdom, let all our failures and errors, let all our self-reproaches and aspirations bring us home to Thy feet in humility, in thankfulness, and in hope.

Never let the consciousness of our sins keep us back from prayer and thanksgiving, or lead our souls to doubt of Thy unchanging and unwearying goodness.

If our hearts accuse us of transgression, do Thou assure us of Thy merciful forgiveness and promise us more grace in the future. May our days be lightened by Thy presence, and in our darkest night may we commend ourselves to Thy sheltering

arms, that, when the night of death draws near, we may fear no evil, knowing that Thou art with us, and Thy hand of mercy and loving-kindness which has been our guide and stay through life, shall never be withdrawn. *Amen.*

As down in the sunless retreats of the ocean
Sweet flowers are springing no mortal can see,
So deep in my soul the still prayer of devotion,
Unheard by the world, rises silent to Thee.

THOMAS MOORE.

ANOTHER day has gone, and body and mind alike long for repose. But before I yield myself to slumber, the last words of my lips, the last meditations of my heart, shall be consecrate to Thee, Almighty God, and to Thine adoration. The day was begun with thoughts of Thee, with prayer unto Thy mercy will I end it.

I thank Thee, Father, that Thou hast guarded me this day in all my walks and duties. What I have gained, or what achieved, is not due to my skill or my endeavor, but to Thy fostering love and bounty. And although many an object for which I may strive at times shall prove unattainable, yet far be it from me ever to permit a spirit of discontent

or disappointment to take possession of me. I can pacify my heart with the conviction that what I have failed to reach would not to Thy wisdom have seemed good and wholesome for me.

And now that this day is over, the reflection comes to me: Have I had Thee and Thy commands present to my mind? Have my conscience and Thy law been to-day my counselors, or have I deviated from the path which Thou hast pointed out to us?

I beseech Thee, God, who searchest the inmost thoughts of man, to pardon me for all errors which wittingly or unwittingly I have in the course of this day committed, so that now, as I resign my body to rest, to my mind shall come the precious peace of heart and conscience.

Let strengthening and refreshing sleep now descend upon mine eyes and awaken me on a new day's dawning to health and cheerful work. Preserve me from all danger and harm. Be with me and all my dear ones through the night. Let us nestle beneath the shelter of Thy loving protection, so that though the light of day has gone from us for the present, the light of Thy grace and guardianship still shall shine over us. And Thou dost

not sleep nor dost Thou slumber, Thou Guardian of Israel; for Thy salvation do I wait, O Lord. *Amen.*

Our birth is but a sleep and a forgetting;
The soul that rises with us, our life's star,
Hath had elsewhere its setting,
And cometh from afar.
Not in entire forgetfulness,
And not in utter nakedness,
But trailing clouds of glory do we come
From God, who is our home.

WILLIAM WORDSWORTH.

FROM everlasting to everlasting Thou art God. The grass withereth, the flowers fade, but Thy manifestation of Thyself endures forever. We are but shadows, and shadows we do often pursue, but Thou art the Eternal One which inhabiteth eternity, and Thou Thyself dost dwell in us and lead us on and up from the shadow to the reality, from the temporal to the eternal. When we consider the heavens which Thou hast made, what is man that Thou art mindful of him, or the son of man that Thou shouldst visit him! And yet Thou hast made him but a little lower than the gods — yea, Thou dost dwell in him and make him Godlike,

and Thou dost promise that we also, when Thy work with us has been completed, shall be partakers of the Divine nature. More are we than the powers of earth, for we control them; more than the stars, for we visit them; more than all material things, for Thou speakest through them, but Thou dwellest in us. Sons of Thine are we. Sons at least we may become, for Thou hast purposed that through all the pain and suffering of this lower life Thou wilt work out Thine own resplendent design. Thou hast declared that all things work together for good to them that love Thee, and in that faith we are sure that neither life nor death, nor principalities nor powers, nor things present nor things to come, nor height nor depth, nor any other created thing, can separate us from Thy love. We come to Thee as Thy sons, sure of Thy blessing because Thou art the Eternal One, sure of Thy blessing because Thy fatherhood makes Thy Godhood, and Thou art God because Thou art eternal life.

We pray to Thee for those on whom the shadow of great grief has fallen; we bring before Thee in our prayers and hearts' desires those that have learned the meaning of the declaration, in the

midst of life we are in death. Father, may they find in Thy presence the eternal rest and the comfort that makes strong through sorrow. We pray for those that seem to draw nigh unto the eternal world, to whom the shadows grow more shadowy, to whom the vanities of life become more vain and evanescent. Father, strengthen them by Thy might in the inner man and fit them for this life or for the other, as Thou shalt direct, bearing them in Thine arms as the shepherd beareth his sheep, nurturing, sustaining, inspiring, comforting.

And remember, dear God, those of us that still remain in the affluence but also in the burden of life; make us wise in all the perplexing problems, strong in all the wrestling, valiant in the battles. Help us to keep ourselves pure. Purify us when we have fallen from purity. Remember those that are laid aside from work, in whom the aspiration and ambition of labor are denied by Thy providence. Help them to do that which is the most difficult of all things to do—to stand and wait, and still to wait, in patience; and help those to whom Thou dost give the burden of work, and make them thankful for the privilege of service and the joy of labor.

Bless our homes, our children, our nation. O, touch our eyes that we may know the Lord our God that dwelleth with us, and may rejoice and be strong. Out of our sorrows and our joys, out of our struggles, our victories and our defeats, out of our living and out of our dying, we lift our voices up unto Thee, Thou that dost rejoice with those that rejoice and weepest with those that weep, that in that strange, marvelous, infinitely varied sympathy, each one of us may receive that portion of life he most needs, that fitting we all require for the various duties and paths that lie before us. *Amen.*

The day is done, and the darkness
Falls from the wings of night,
As a feather is wafted downward
From an eagle in his flight.

HENRY W. LONGFELLOW.

PAST are now the quiet hours of evening; vanished again is a day in the stream of time; and the sombre night falls on the earth, enveloping all things in dark shadows. Consciousness of Thy benevolence and paternal love is renewed in every reflecting mind. With the loving hand of a father hast

Thou, all-kind Creator, conducted me throughout this day, in which I have participated in Thy goodness although I might in many ways have desecrated the sanctuary Thou hast planted within me, and which dignifies mankind. Forgiving and pardoning art Thou, O God, to Thy devoted servants, a forgiving and indulgent Father wilt Thou be to me also at all times. Yea, O Heavenly Parent, I trust in Thy mercy and grace, in the hope that Thou wilt endow me with energy to improve my walk in life, and courage to resist the allurements of sin. O may the evening of every day bear testimony that I have not failed to profit by Thy manifold bounties as seed for eternity, so that I may lay my head on my pillow in tranquillity and confidence, and awake again to renewed joy in Thy blessing.

To Thy hand, "O Keeper of Israel who neither sleepeth nor slumbereth," do I commit my spirit; mayst Thou strengthen it anew so that it may always act according to Thy will, and be received by Thee with grace when its mortal covering shall be summoned to eternal sleep. *Amen.*

This world is but the vestibule of an immortal life. Every action of our lives touches on some chord that will vibrate in eternity. EDWIN H. CHAPIN.

MOST merciful Father, another day has passed and the night is come when, in Thy loving providence, we may rest our weary bodies in refreshing slumber.

We will not close our eyes till we have thanked Thee, Lord, for the many mercies of the day that is gone, for such measure of health and strength and cheerfulness as we have had for our toil; for those pleasures of recreation and mirth which have refreshed our spirits; and, above all, for the kindness and love shown to us by those with whom we live and work.

We thank Thee, too, for our trials and difficulties; for such failure in health or strength or joy as seemed good in Thy sight for us to suffer. And may the remembrance of all Thy bounty and most wise and gracious control deepen our sorrow at the faults we have committed, and fill our souls with holy resolutions to do better in time to come.

As the darkness closes in upon us, and sweet sleep shuts out the memory of our past life, so may we hide and bury away from us our weaknesses and

our sins, and rise up once more to newness of life, quickened by Thy love, and holding by Thy hand. *Amen.*

Prayer ardent opens heaven. EDWARD YOUNG.

I THANK Thee, O my heavenly Father, for the great mercies Thou hast vouchsafed me in granting that another day should pass in health and gladness. I thank Thee for permitting me again to enjoy the calm repose of night; that no affliction of mind or body should prevent my welcoming this season of quiet as a blessed gift from Thee. I bless Thee, Lord, for granting me the comfort of a home and shelter from the night air, from temptations and perils. Even the luxurious couch on which I lay me down to rest is Thy gift, O merciful God—for how many of my fellow-creatures are deprived of that luxury, and after working hard through the day, how different is the couch on which their wearied and perhaps aching limbs are laid, to that which Thou hast vouchsafed me.

O how tame are my praises — my words of thanksgiving — O God, how unworthy I am of Thy goodness!

Bless all those kind friends and relations Thou

hast so mercifully bestowed upon me; guard them from evil, distress, or bodily suffering.

Weak and naturally sinful as I am, I know not how to guard my sleeping thoughts from folly and from vice. In the silence of night thoughts may enter my mind and fill it with vain and proud imaginations; with foolish, if not sinful wishes and desires. Without Thy aid, O Lord, I cannot guard my soul from these vain, idle fancies, and they may gain dominion over me, and then shall I sink with remorse and sin. Father of Heaven: O be Thou with me. Do not Thou forsake me in these helpless and unguarded hours. O Thou knowest the weakness of Thy creature; then have compassion on me, and preserve me from the sins and follies of my own mind, and the terrors, diseases and dangers that dwell in darkness and silence, and from which Thy mighty arm alone can shield us. O teach my thoughts to fly to Thee—to that glorious Heaven where Thou dwellest. O raise them from the groveling earth and bid them soar to Thee, where alone are perfect happiness and peace and glory. Permit me to rise up on the morrow prepared to worship Thee; to receive all enjoyments as blessings from Thy hand of which I am

unworthy, and sorrows as yet greater mercies, for they will chasten me and draw me nearer Thee and render me more fitted for another sphere. O Lord, my God, how dare I appeal to Thee for such great mercies when every day, ay, every hour, either in word or deed or thought I sin against Thee? O forgive my manifold transgressions; I acknowledge them with a humble and penitent spirit, for I know that they are great and I can do no good in any degree to atone for them, for imprudent and thoughtless, when opportunities of doing some trifling good do occur too frequently do I neglect them. Father of Mercy, O do not withdraw Thy goodness from me, unworthy as I am. Do not Thou forsake me nor withdraw Thy holy spirit from me, for then the blessing Thou hast vouchsafed me in permitting me to pray to Thee will be denied me and I shall become blinded and miserable as those whom Thou hast not permitted to know the holy consolations of humble and fervent prayer. Have mercy on such afflicted ones, O Lord, and pour Thy holy grace upon their souls, and darkness and misery shall flee away, for they will know and love and praise their merciful Creator. Father, hear me, and in Thy mercy

hearken to the cry of Thy servant, for Thou seest my heart and thoughts, O Lord. O ever make them full of love for Thee. *Amen.*

Our brightest noon is but a folded waiting; at the evening time it shall be light, and we shall live.

A. D. T. WHITNEY.

AGAIN the evening shadows fall around us, and while everything is softened by their glimmering veil we would withdraw into ourselves and seriously consider what it has meant for us to live another day in such a world as this, with such heavens above us and such an earth around, with such friends to love us and to love, with such memories to cherish, and such hopes to fondly dare, with such work to do, such books to read, such thoughts of ever glorious poets and prophets to think after them with grateful hearts. We trust that we have not been all unworthy of this bounteous ministration and this beseeching grace of life. We trust that we have not taken so much from the full-handed day and given nothing back. We would fain believe that we have done our work in some brave and noble fashion, proudly conscious of ourselves as co-workers with an innumerable company

of hard-working men and women; that we have not been foolish or selfish in our play; and that the fleeting hours have yielded us something that will not pass. And now again, O Father, we put our hands in Thine, that Thou mayest lead us down into the land of sleep and dreams, there to renew our strength, that we enter joyfully upon the duties and pleasures of another day. As we fall asleep, and as again we wake, may some thought of Thee fall like a benediction on our hearts and give them quietness and peace. *Amen.*

Thrice blest whose lives are faithful prayers,
Whose loves in higher love endure.

ALFRED TENNYSON.

FATHER and Friend, who hast made the day for labor and the night for repose; we commit ourselves to Thy tender care at the close of this day, mindful of all Thy mercies and loving-kindnesses.

We thank Thee for every faithful deed we have done this day, for every good and kind word spoken, and for every conquest of our own selves when temptation has assailed us. If we have been remiss in our duty, negligent of our opportunities,

or disobedient to Thy law, do Thou in mercy give us true contrition, and help us on the morrow to amend our ways, and to be more worthy of Thy light and Thy love.

When we lie helpless in our slumber, we know that Thy tender eye is watching over us and Thine everlasting arms enfolding us. May we have grace to remember this when we rise from our beds, and show forth our thankfulness, not only with our lips, but in our lives, to Thy honor and glory. *Amen.*

Some make mountains of duties and trifles of sins: such souls are under a deception. *Select Sentences.*

AS now I am about to lay me down to rest, I pray Thee, O God, that Thou wilt look with mercy upon my day's doings. Wherein I have sinned in ignorance, O do Thou enlighten me that I may do so no more. Wherein I have sinned with presumption, O do Thou forgive, and grant me purer heart and nobler spirit when like occasion arises again. Wherein I have done well and followed Thy path, may it be Thy will to be pleased therewith, and may I grow stronger in that good deed, and braver to follow that path.

But my life with all its good and evil is in Thy

hands, and I beseech Thee to guard and preserve it during the night. Thou who neither sleepest nor slumberest, watch Thou over my sleeping house, and guard and safe-keep it in Thy all-powerful care. May the morning greet me and mine in health and joyful spirit, that we may fulfill our tasks to our happiness and to the honor of the great Name. *Amen.*

Thou shalt not fear the terrors of the night, nor the arrow which flieth by day. *Ps. xci. 5.*

ANOTHER day has passed — I have taken another step towards the tomb. I ask my heart, Has this day been devoid of good works? This day might have contributed to my eternal salvation; but alas! I have wasted it in earthly vanities. This day is perhaps the last of a life little worthy of Thy mercy; for, as the Psalmist says, "The days of man are like a passing shadow."

Fearful thought! Perhaps the angel of death may claim me this night for his own. Watch over me, O Eternal! in love; while I sleep protect me in mercy.

Preserve my body during the night and my soul

by day, so that I may walk in fear of sin, and in the path of virtue. Permit me, O Lord! to invoke Thee in behalf of my fellow creatures. Have pity on man's weakness, and preserve Thy children from the temptations of sin. Enlighten the blind, give food to the needy, peace to the unhappy, health to the sick, firmness to the just, perseverance to the penitent, and may we all remain firm in the faith, and constant in the practice of virtue.

Father of all! full of confidence in Thy love, I raise my eyes towards Thee when I awake and trust in Thee when I sleep. I will not fear. I shall sleep in peace, for Thou, my Father, wilt watch over me, Thou art my Guardian.

May my evening prayer ascend to Thy dwelling-place, O Lord! and grant me mercy this day and forever. *Amen.*

If we are ever in doubt what to do, it is a good rule to ask ourselves what we shall wish on the morrow that we had done.

JOHN LUBBOCK.

HOW grateful, Almighty Father, am I to feel that as the day's work is over and I prepare myself for the night's repose Thou dost neither sleep

nor slumber, but in the night-time art ever near. It is the consciousness of Thy presence, as light in darkness, shelter in danger, solace in grief, that accompanies me as I close my eyelids. I thank Thee for the blessing of sleep—the night's restoration of my energies, in the tabernacle of Thy peace. Banish all anxieties from this closing hour, all harsh feeling and bitter judgment: but let Thy Psalmist, Hope, gladden my meditation. My little world is asleep at last, my home and those nearest to me are at rest. How joyous the thought that all are in Thy keeping and our sleep is not endless! Soon, if it be Thy will, the watches of the night will be over and my eyes be opened again. Do Thou freshen and inspire my sight that it may be alive to the true beauty of life, with its ceaseless activity and its wondrous privileges. And as the shadows depart, so let all sorrows and burdens take wings and fly, in the fuller light of Thy love and mercy. Awaken me, O God, to a new day in hope and confidence, and arouse me to keener effort to spread goodness and truth. *Amen.*

O, fear not in a world like this,
And thou shalt know erelong,
Know how sublime a thing it is
To suffer and be strong.

HENRY W. LONGFELLOW.

LORD of all goodness and truth, in whose love we may ever confide without one doubt or fear, we commit ourselves to Thy faithful care in the darkness and helplessness of the coming night.

Nothing is too small for Thy regard, nothing too weak for Thy protection. We ask Thee, Lord, to bless us all with the exceeding sweetness of Thy peace, that we may cast all our care away, and lie down in perfect repose, as in Thine everlasting arms. If weakness or fear people the darkness with terrors, let the thought of Thy nearness dispel them.

Make Thou Thy strength perfect in our weakness, and teach us, by our own sweet experience, what it is to cast our burden upon Thee.

Comfort and succor all those who are in any trouble of mind, body, or estate, whose hearts upbraid them for sins committed, for duties left undone, for unkind words spoken, for angry feelings indulged.

Forgive and bless, heal and sanctify us all, that we may rise again on the morrow full of holy purpose to serve Thee better, and to obey more constantly Thy righteous and loving will. *Amen.*

All human goodness is a revelation of God's goodness, but the highest revelation is the voice of one's own heart.

JOHN WHITE CHADWICK.

PRAISED be Thou, Lord our God and Ruler of the Universe, by whose word the shades of evening fall, and in the wisdom of whose ordainings the stars shine forth in their appointed courses. At Thy will, O Creator, daylight passes away and night approaches; at Thy commanding word must darkness yield to light again. Lord of the hosts of heaven is Thy hallowed name, eternal living God. We praise Thee for the falling of the eveningtide.

We humbly thank Thee, Lord, who art the rock of our existence. We thank Thee for our lives which are bound up in Thy hand, for our souls that depend upon Thee, for the good and wondrous care with which at all times, morning, noon and night, we are surrounded. All-merciful One, Thy goodness hath no end. Thy grace is unbounded, and we do put our hope in Thee always.

Cause us to lie down, O Lord, in peace, and let us rise again to life and health. Spread over us the pavilion of Thy peace, help and protect us, ward off all evil and all sorrow. Cover us with the shadow of Thy wings, for Thou art our Protector. Guard all our goings out and our comings in, for Thou art He who spreadeth peace as a pavilion over all mankind. *Amen.*

To err is human, to forgive divine.

ALEXANDER POPE.

I THANK Thee, Almighty Father, for having protected me through this day and granted me health to enjoy the many pleasures which Thou continually bestowest upon me. I am grateful to Thee for withholding me from falling into temptation, and pray that Thy Fatherly care will guide me in whatever position I may be placed in the future. Father, if trouble should enter my household, as it must at some time or another, teach me to bear it bravely, and do my part towards alleviating the misery of those who must share the burden with me.

Forgive the sins I may have committed during the past hours, and let me seek my rest with a feeling of kindliness towards all Thy creatures. Be

Thou near me and my dear ones through this night, and grant that we may all meet on the morrow refreshed by sleep and prepared to follow our several pursuits. *Amen.*

The strongest and most enduring faith comes from conquered doubts. GEORGE H. HEPWORTH.

ETERNAL, our God, and God of our fathers, Almighty Ruler of the Universe, who renderest just reward unto all Thy creatures, eternal is Thy love, as Thy might is infinite. Thou sustainest in mercy the living, Thou upholdest the falling, healest the sick, freest the imprisoned, and fulfillest Thy gracious promise of immortal life to those who sleep in the dust. Blessed art Thou, O God, perfect in justice and holiness.

Heavenly Father, who graciously bestowest knowledge on man and endowest him with reason, be pleased to send us the light of Thy truth that we may gain an ever clearer insight into the wisdom of Thy ways. Banish from our hearts every desire and thought of evil, that we may truly reverence Thy holy name. Forgive us our sins, pardon our failings, and remove from us suffering and sorrow.

May the erring and the wayward be led to know Thy loving-kindness, and to serve Thee in newness of heart; and may those who love virtue and do the right ever be glad in Thy favor. Bless our land with plenty, and our nation with peace; may righteousness dwell in our midst and virtue reign among us. O Thou, who knowest our needs before we utter them, and ordainest all things for the best, in Thee do we forever put our trust. *Amen.*

There is no such word as "too late" in the wide world—nay, not in the Universe. What! shall we, whose atom of time is but a fragment out of an ever-present eternity—shall we, so long as we live, or even at our life's ending, dare to cry out to the Eternal One, "It is too late!"

DINAH M. MULOCK.

OPEN our understanding, O God, that we may discern Thee. Deliver us from the thrall of our senses; and that we may not trust them in overmeasure, nor be mastered or guided by them, deliver us from the thought that Thou art to be found in agents of power, or that the things which come to the eye, or fill it with wonder, represent Thee. Deliver us from thinking that only in government, in industry, and in the great world of society there

is Thy power; grant unto us to appreciate the silence of God, the unrevealed mystery of Thy presence. Give us an inward light to discern an inward hearing, that we may gather what Thou hast to say to Thy silent ones. O, give us soul-power. Give us that power of faith by which to discern unimaginable things, and lift us into those attitudes of the soul where we shall meet Thee, where Thy thoughts are powerful, and where every being distills influence.

Deliver us, we beseech of Thee, from all those misconceptions and overestimates of human life that turn upon the life that now is—upon our bodily condition. For we belong to heaven, we belong to our Father's household, but we have lost our way back thither, and we grope, we stumble, we grieve in discouragements, or we sit down in contentment with the things which we find by the way, willing to be exiled — perpetually exiled.

Now, grant unto us, we pray Thee, the lost hunger and thirst after righteousness—the longing for God. Grant unto us that drawing power by which everything that is in us shall call out for Thee. Become necessary unto us. With the morning and evening light, at noon and at mid-

night, may we feel the need of Thy companionship. Wherever our hearts open may we be within the sweet influence of Thy nature; and though Thou dost not speak as man speaks, yet Thou canst call out to us; and the soul shall know Thy presence, and shall understand by its own self what Thou meanest. Grant unto us this witness of the Spirit, this communion of the soul with Thee — and not only once or twice: may we abide in the light.

Thou hast come unto Thine own; and even as of old, Thine own know Thee not, and believe Thee not. How many are there tonight that have learned Thy name upon their mother's knee; but have forgotten it! How many are there that grew up into the happiness of a childhood in which piety presided, but have gone away, and have not come back again to their first love and to their early faith! How many who have been tossed about in the world have taken their views of experience from this mortal life in its lowest forms! How many are there marching on now in the Sahara of indifference and in the wilderness of unbelief! How many are there without God and without hope in this world! What shall become of them? Shall they perish, as the fruit? Shall they go out, as a light extinguished?

Lord, look upon them ; and if there be such to-night, have merciful thoughts toward them, and issue those gracious influences of power by which what is best in them shall lift itself up and bear witness against that which is worst. May the things which are just, and pure, and noble, and high, become to us dearer than silver or gold. For what in all the world is worth the royalty of our own souls! What can all these things do for us in the day of tribulation! How many have had the reed on which they leaned break ! How many who have laid up treasure in our time have seen it scattered as dust is scattered by the wind ! How many there have been that have broken through the plans of their life! How many there have been that have tasted at this and that fountain, and found their thirst not slaked! How many there are who know that this life cannot build them up nor enrich them! And though they had the whole possession of it, it would bring not contentment, but care, and even desolation of all that is noblest and best.

May men come into new partnership with Thee. May they think of that which is best for them. Out of all the distemperatures of this life, and out of all its temptations and fiery influences, O, may

there be some that shall escape, and not be overwhelmed with an everlasting destruction.

Bless us through life; and when at last the sign comes, O, let the gates of pearl be opened, and let us discern what it means to die: that it is to begin life—the ungroaning life—the life without temptation and without sin — the glorious life of the soul, set free from the drudgery and bondage of the body! *Amen.*

## A PRAYER

MY heart is weary and my will is weak,
My soul dismayed ;
I know not where nor how for peace to seek :
'Tis long since I have prayed.
Help me, O God !

My mind is full of sadness, and distressed
I raise my tired eyes
With all their burden of my life's unrest
Unto the star-lit skies.
Help me, O God !

They say that Thou art there beyond the sky,
That Thou wilt hear
And answer when to Thee I humbly cry ;
Then come Thou near
And help me, God.

Teach me, my God, to mould my life
On broader lines,
Until no littleness or petty strife
My soul confines.
Help me, O God !

I 'm tired, Lord, of being e'er alone
'Mid all this busy strife ;
I want no more to be an idle drone,
I want to *live* my life.
Help me, O God !

VIRA RIAL.

# PART II

## MORNING AND EVENING MEDITATIONS FOR THE YOUNG

Remember now thy Creator in the days of thy youth.

*Eccl. xii. 1.*

Let your child grow up in companionship with God; let him love the world God has made, read God's handwriting and listen for God's whisper; let him know what the words "our Father" mean.

EDWARD EVERETT HALE.

## ON FAMILY PRAYER*

IT appears to me of the utmost consequence to impress the infant mind as early as possible with notions of veneration and love for their Father in Heaven, and this is easily and delightfully accomplished by their ever associating their *parents* with their prayers. Imitation is the quality almost the first discernible in children; the love and confidence they bear towards their parents, young children for a mother particularly, urges them to imitate all the latter does, even to imbibe her feelings of love, or the contrary, wherever they are visible. Will a child ever forget such lessons? O no! Even in moments of temptation, of doubtful enjoyments, the thought of his mother will be there to check and save him from evil and from sin.

* I have selected those portions bearing upon the subject of the importance of religious home-training for the young.—A. J. L.

How few young, gentle hearts pass through life unscathed by those inward sorrows which can be healed only by the consciousness that the love borne towards us by our Father in Heaven is deeper, stronger than the dearest felt for us by our friends on earth; and how can we learn this love but by studying His word, and how seek Him in our troubles but by being used in our infancy to address Him in every sorrow, and praise Him for every childish joy.

Many think such intimate communion lowers the dignity and destroys the veneration we should feel towards our God, that such little things are unworthy of His regard; but surely this is a false estimate of the Universal Love that feeds the little birds of the air and clothes the blossoms of the field. This is judging Him "whose ways are not our ways," as if He were an earthly sovereign; not one who loves and cares for us all, from the King of a mighty empire to the virtuous child of the poorest beggar—"For as the Heaven is high above the earth, so great is His mercy toward them that fear Him."

Nor should we despond if years, long weary years run on ere we can trace any reward for our labor

and self-denial; for rigidly and firmly must a mother who wishes thus to instruct her children watch herself, that her precepts be confirmed by example, that in her whole conduct she displays their fruits. Of this she may rest assured, that never was fervent and faithful prayer unheard by the God of love; and, therefore, if prayer for His assistance, His blessing, ever accompany our efforts for our children, we shall be heard, ay, and answered, however long that answer may be deferred, however painful may be our path till it be vouchsafed.

GRACE AGUILAR.

# MORNING

## A PRAYER FOR YOUNG PERSONS

Lord, make me to know mine end and the measure of my days, what it is ; that I may know how frail I am.

*Ps. xxxix. 4.*

O MY Father, look upon me Thy child, and have pity upon my weakness and loneliness. I have no help but Thine. O let me not go astray, or believe anything untrue and unworthy of Thee. I am like a little child, and need to be taught what is Thy truth, amid all the various opinions of men. Keep my soul firm and steadfast, let me not be shaken in my perfect trust in Thee, nor let my heart wander from loving Thee, my only God, my Father and Friend.

Make and keep me good, that I may be obedient to my parents, kind and amiable to my family, and useful to all.

Make and keep me true of heart, that I may hate nothing so much as lying and deceit, and that I may always have courage to speak the truth.

Help me to bear all my sorrow and disappointment for Thy sake, knowing that it is good for me; and help me to cling all the closer to Thee for the trouble I have to bear.

O make me Thine forever, and to love Thee with all my heart and soul. *Amen.*

As the flowers open in the warm sunshine, so may our souls unfold in the light of Thy love. KAUFMAN KOHLER.

MY waking thoughts belong to Thee, O Heavenly Father! Every morning Thy love shines with new brightness. I bless Thee for Thy watchful care at night, for the refreshing sleep, for the health and happiness Thou bestowest on us daily. Let me, O God, go forth with pure thoughts and good resolutions to do my day's work well and faithfully. Guide me and keep me in the path of virtue and gentleness, and let me grow better, wiser and stronger in goodness and usefulness. Guard me against all evil and wrong-doing, and create in me a clean heart and a firm spirit, that I may be obedient and thankful to my parents and benefactors,

loving and kind to all my friends, and happy and cheerful before Thee forever. *Amen.*

'Tis always morning somewhere, and above
The awakening continents from shore to shore,
Somewhere the birds are singing evermore.

HENRY W. LONGFELLOW.

LORD and Father, I thank Thee for the sweet rest of the night and for Thy protection when danger surrounded me. Thou art my Shield, I will not fear, I trust in Thee. O lead me in Thy path, make Thy way plain to me that I may find no pleasure in wickedness, and no profit in evil. Incline my heart to hearken to the correction of my father and to listen to the instruction of my mother. Make me eager to do Thy will. Help me to be faithful in the performance of all my duties, even the slightest ones; and establish Thou the work of my hands, that Thy beauty may be upon me. *Amen.*

When you go to prayer, remember you are going to meet your best, your beloved Friend. *Select Sentences.*

* O LORD God of our fathers, God of Israel and Father of all mankind, I lift up my heart to

* This prayer was written by request for a Jewish boy.

Thee as I rise from my bed this day, thanking Thee for my safety and rest, and my new life and joy. Help me to give my life to Thee in all good works. Keep Thou my tongue from evil, from speaking falsely or unkindly. Keep my hands from every wicked, dishonest, or cruel deed. Keep my heart clean from all unholy thoughts; fill it with desires to be good and to flee from evil. When I am weak, give me strength; when I am strong, may I be willing to lend my strength to my neighbor, and to help everyone around me by diligent and faithful work.

When I am happy, let me lift my glad heart to Thee, and bless Thee for all my joys. When I am sad, let me find my comfort in knowing that Thou art my Friend, and that sorrow is good for me sometimes.

Teach me, O Father, to believe what is true, to avoid what is wrong, and to do what is right. Make even me, Thy child, a blessing to all around me by being trustworthy and kind. Whether I am sick or in health, rich or poor, living or dying, let me remember Thy loving-kindness, and praise Thee with a joyful heart. *Amen.*

See that no minute's glow
Of all the shining hours unheeded goes;
No fount of rightful joy by thee untasted flows.

JOHN WHITE CHADWICK.

ALMIGHTY God, Thy loving-kindness endureth forever. Daily Thou renewest Thy tender care unto us all. I thank Thee for the gift of life and for all the blessings that come with it. O help me to keep pure the soul Thou hast given me. May I never mar Thine image within me by unworthy deeds, but strive always to be God-like. O teach me to love right and truth in loving Thee, and never to forget Thee because Thou art unseen.

Let me understand the pleasure of duty, the joy of being helpful to others, the beauty of holiness. Aid me to bring sunshine into the lives of mother and father. May I never pain them wilfully or by neglect, but always strive to further their happiness. Search me, O God, and know my heart, and lead me from evil to Thee. *Amen.*

Youth is preëminently the time of preparation.

FELIX ADLER.

I THANK Thee, O God! for the rest and strengthening sleep Thou hast granted me during the night, and for the glorious light of day

Thou dost cause to shine again for our benefit. I thank Thee also for the blessing of health accorded me.

Make me good and amiable so that I may obey my dear parents and instructors, who take such pains to teach me; for I shall then deserve Thy blessings.

May Thy holy name be praised in all the earth. *Amen.*

Even a child is known by his doings, whether his work be pure and whether it be right. *Prov. xx. 11.*

DEAR Father in Heaven, teach me to love Thee and to know that Thou dost love me. May I never be afraid of anything except doing wrong. Help me to say always what is true, and to obey my dear parents, and to be good and kind to everyone. If I wish for something very much, make me feel willing to go without it, if it be against Thy will. If I have any pleasure, let me remember that Thou hast sent it, and whenever I am disappointed, teach me to know that it is because Thou lovest me, and art very wise, and knowest that it is good for us not to have always our own way. *Amen.*

The childhood shows the man
As morning shows the day.

JOHN MILTON.

I THANK Thee, O God, for Thy loving-kindness toward me. Thou hast watched over me while I was asleep, and Thou hast awakened me to life and usefulness. Be with me this day and evermore, that I may be a good and obedient child, deserve the love of my dear parents and teachers, and find favor in the sight of God and men. *Amen.*

A little word in kindness spoken,
A motion or a tear
Has often healed the heart that 's broken,
And made a friend sincere.
. . . . . .
Then deem it not an idle thing
A pleasant word to speak.
The face you wear, the thoughts you bring,
A heart may heal or break.

JOHN G. WHITTIER.

NOW another day has come, and I will lift my heart to Thee, my Father in Heaven, who hast kept me safe and given me sweet sleep in the past night. May I rejoice in Thee more than in anything else which I have to make me happy. Teach me to

feel how good and kind Thou art, that I may love to be good and kind, and try to be better every day I live. Keep my hands from doing wrong and my lips from speaking falsehood. Help me to be patient when I am offended, and good-tempered when I am disappointed. Make me love and obey my dear father and mother, and those who are set over me; and, though I am but a little child, teach me how to be a comfort and joy to all around me, and to grow every day more like Thee. *Amen.*

# EVENING

## A PRAYER FOR YOUNG PERSONS

Drink the sweet rain the gentle heaven sendeth ;
Hold thine own path, howeverward it tendeth ;
For somewhere, underneath the eternal sky,
Thou, too, shalt find the rivers by and by !

A. D. T. WHITNEY.

O LOVING Father, I come home to Thee after my weary work in this world, and after all my strife and contest with myself, to lay me down in peace upon Thy breast, to ask Thee to give me rest, to heal all the wounds of my spirit, to cleanse me from my sin. O let me not go wrong out of Thy commandments. Help me to control myself and not to yield to any unholy desire or to any angry passion, or to my miserable self-will.

If others tempt me to do wrong, let me flee from them, and shut the door of my heart against their

wicked word; if others vex and wound me, let me be patient and kind to them. Let me remember how often I have vexed Thee, and yet Thou dost love me still.

O my God, do with me as Thou wilt, if only I may love Thee best, and walk steadfastly in Thy ways of righteousness and truth.

Bless and keep all whom I dearly love, and grant them the peace and bliss I ask for myself. And grant to us that all our earthly loves may be pure and holy, and help us in our journey home to Thee.

My God, I praise Thee for all Thy bounty and mercy! Father, I rejoice in Thy love. Let me never wander from Thee. *Amen.*

No fountain so small but that Heaven may be imaged in its bosom. NATHANIEL HAWTHORNE.

THOU, O God! never slumberest nor sleepest. Thine eyes constantly watch over all Thy children in compassion and love. Thou sendest gentle sleep upon our weary eye-lids to refresh our bodies with new strength for the coming day's work. O Lord, search me and see whether I have been faithful in doing my day's duties; whether my pathway

was bright with good deeds; whether I tried to cheer the hearts of my good parents, relatives and friends by words and actions of true kindness and humble thankfulness; whether I endeavored to make life sweet and happy to my fellow-men, and prove a true child of Thine. O Heavenly Father! pardon me if I have been neglectful in performing my duties, or fretful and disobedient. Have compassion on my weakness, and grant me the sweet sleep of innocence and purity. Put all impure thoughts and unkind feelings away from me, and let me rise holier and better, and more fitted to serve Thee in love and truth. *Amen.*

This world is a cradle; and God rocks it, and hears its cry and knows its need. HENRY WARD BEECHER.

FATHER, I thank Thee for the joys and blessings of this day. Thou art my Shepherd, I shall not want. Thou sleepest not and slumberest not; I fear no evil, for Thou art with me. I see Thee always before me and am afraid of no terror by night and no danger by day. O teach me Thy ways and help me to make Thy will my will, that in peace I may lay me down and sleep the sleep of

the righteous. Bless this home and all who are bound to me by ties of love and friendship.

In Thy help I trust, O Lord. *Amen.*

Be virtuous while thou art young; so shall thine age be honored. *Select Sentences.*

* LORD God of our fathers, God of Israel, Friend of the world, before I lie down to slumber let me bless Thy holy name for all the mercies of the day now past. For all Thy strength and grace and comfort, O God, I thank Thee with a grateful heart. For all the good and kind friends who have made my life what it is, O God, I thank Thee. Let me not lose these great opportunities; let not Thy favor be given me in vain. Bless and reward those who have loved and helped and taught me this day, and grant them their heart's desire.

Refresh my body with sweet sleep, and when I wake may my first thoughts turn to Thee, and all my days be spent in Thy service. *Amen.*

* This prayer was written by request for a Jewish boy.

Lord of all being ! throned afar,
Thy glory flames from sun and star ;
Centre and soul of every sphere,
Yet to each loving heart how near !

OLIVER WENDELL HOLMES.

FATHER of Mercies, I thank Thee for Thy care, which hath no end, and for Thy love which goeth far beyond my knowledge. I thank Thee for the strength which Thou renewest each day so that my tasks become a joy. And now, at night, when my powers are exhausted and Thou takest me in Thy arms, I thank Thee for the sweet sleep that falls upon me.

O teach me to obey the voice of my conscience, which is Thy voice within me. May no fear of suffering lead me away from the love of right; but aid me to fear sin more than pain.

O forgive my failings of the past day. Help me to be more thoughtful for others, more patient to all. O preserve my dear parents and those who love me from all harm. And deepen my faith in Thee, so that I shall not be afraid, whatever may befall me. *Amen.*

God made all the creatures and gave them
Our love and our fear
To show, we and they are His children,
One family here.

ROBERT BROWNING.

GOD of Mercy! night has come again, and I lie down and give myself up to sleep without fear. No harm can befall me; for Thou never sleepest, but dost watch over and guard us all. I beseech Thee to protect me during the hours of rest, likewise my dear parents who are so kind to me, and teach me to know Thy holy will. *Amen.*

Train up a child in the way he should go; and when he is old he will not depart from it. *Prov. xxii. 6.*

O GRACIOUS Father, before I go to sleep this night I will thank Thee for all the health and pleasure I have enjoyed today. I will thank Thee if I have been good and happy, and not got into any trouble through doing wrong; and yet I will thank Thee, too, for all the sadness and sorrow which I have had to bear, because it is good for me, and Thou art faithful. Thy love makes us suffer sometimes. Teach me to bear it patiently,

and, if it comes through my own fault, let it teach me to be wise and good. Bless and take care of us all in the darkness, and let none of us be afraid of anything but sin. *Amen.*

If I can stop one heart from breaking,
I shall not live in vain.
If I can ease one life from aching
Or cool one pain
Or help one fainting robin
Into his nest again,
I shall not live in vain.

EMILY DICKINSON.

BE praised, O God, Ruler of the world, whose love enfolds all Thy children when sleep closes their eyes. Be near me, I beseech Thee, this night, that I may lie down in peace, and rise again in health and strength. Forgive my sins and help me to do what is right. Guard this night against every danger my parents, my brothers and sisters, and all who are dear to me; preserve us from harm and evil, and refresh us with sweet slumber. *Amen.*

By all that He requires of me
I know what God Himself must be.

JOHN G. WHITTIER.

DEAR Father in heaven, as I am about to lay me down to rest I want to offer Thee a prayer of thanks for all the kindness Thou hast shown unto me today. I know I did not deserve Thy goodness, for I did not do my duty as I ought. I have been fretful and impatient, hasty, too, when I should have controlled my temper. And yet, how thoughtful were my dear parents to me, their erring child! But I ask Thy forgiveness, God, for all these failings, and pray for help to improve in the future. Watch over me and my dear ones this night; let us meet again in love ready to do whatever Thou sendest us to do, with a willing heart. *Amen.*

# PART III

## IN TRIBULATION

Into each life some rain must fall,
Some days must be dark and dreary.

HENRY W. LONGFELLOW.

## UNSUNG HEROISM

TO smile when the heart is breaking,
Concealing inward pain,
To plod in the thorny pathways
Through sun and mist and rain ;

To lighten a comrade's burden
By whisp'ring words of cheer,
Dispersing the clouds of sorrow
That heaven may appear ;

To learn to be self-denying,
Unwilling to repine,
The soul ever upwards striving,
To win the peace divine ;—

These noble earthly struggles
With glory shall adorn
Their heroes—bequeathing mem'ries
To races yet unborn.

A. J. L.

## A MEDITATION

He mourns the dead who lives as they desire.

EDWARD YOUNG.

"We often do more good by our sympathy than by our labor."

GOD is nigh to all who call upon Him in truth; He hearkeneth to the voice of the humble and lendeth His ear to the call of the upright in heart. He answereth those that wait for Him, and sendeth light and rest to the longing heart. Every reverent thought is a blessing; every act of homage prompted by our sense of His greatness is a benediction; no true soul-prayer remains unrewarded.

But the purest offering is that prayer which springs from our sympathy with the afflicted, and our compassion with the sorrowing and bereaved. For it is free from all selfish motives; it is inspired by the love of our fellow-men and sanctified by our

pity with the suffering. Surely when we are deeply moved with these feelings, then will the words of our lips and the meditations of our hearts be acceptable on high.

Whilst we are assembled with our friends in the shadow that has fallen on their home and are entering sincerely into their grief, we will raise our voices together in prayer to the Father above, beseeching for them His comfort and His strength. They need light in the gloom that has gathered around their hearth, and whence can it come to them but from the Father of Light? They need fortitude, patience and resignation under the chastenings of the Lord. Whence can they receive these gifts save from Him who has laid the burden of suffering on them?

Who amongst us has not passed through similar trials and endured like visitations? Some bear fresh wounds in their own hearts and therefore feel more keenly the human kinship of sorrow. Others whose days of trial are more remote but who have not yet forgotten them, recall the soothing comfort that fellow-feeling brought to their broken spirits. And those who have not yet tasted of the bitter cup cannot know how soon they may be called upon to

drink of it. We are travelers on the same road which leads to the same goal. All that we prize most highly is but lent to us for a time, and we must surrender it when the Power above demands. Happy the man who lays this to heart and confides in the power of God alone.

May we not leave unheeded the lessons which every house of mourning teaches:

Number well thy earthly days,
Let thy heart to wisdom turn ;
Riches go not with us hence,
Worldly honors stay behind.
Practise virtue, walk upright,
Blissful shall thy end then be.
For God regards His servant's soul,
Forsaketh not, who trusts in Him !

GUSTAV GOTTHEIL.

## MORNING

### IN TIME OF TROUBLE

Earth has no sorrow that Heaven cannot heal.

THOMAS MOORE.

ANOTHER day dawns for me as for all Thy creatures, O Father, and yet, in my weakness, I know not how I shall endure the hours until night. Sinful wishes have sprung up within my heart, and I have prayed for death; but Thou in Thy wisdom wouldst not hear my prayer, and I must live and share the common lot of those into whom Thou hast breathed the breath of life. Forgive my evil inclinations, and show me the right path, that I may perform my daily duties cheerfully and submissively. May this prayer imbue me with the spirit of contentment, whatever trials may be given me to endure. Make me humble before Thee, and lead me into Thy ways. *Amen.*

## IN SICKNESS

One trouble sometimes makes us forget a thousand mercies.
*Select Sentences.*

LORD, Thou hast called me again unto life, and yet I fear the coming hours of pain. O, help me to suffer with patience, and to feel that thousands besides me share my ills and many are worse afflicted. Whatever Thou sendest is for some wise purpose which we finite creatures dare not understand until that final day when Thou callest us home to Thee.

How happy all Thy universe seems, and alas, I may not share its joys! Yet perhaps wilt Thou in Thine infinite goodness send me relief, then can I, too, join the choir of workers in their song of praise. When that time approaches, make me more mindful of Thy blessing of health which once was mine, more charitable and helpful unto all suffering humanity.

Meanwhile, I shall try to retain a cheerful countenance, and be patient to those who must attend to my needs.

The Lord will be nigh unto me, for I will call upon Him in truth. *Amen.*

## ON THE LOSS OF A BELOVED ONE

I

As thrills of long-hushed tone
Live in the viol, so our souls grow fine
With keen vibrations from the touch divine
Of noble natures gone.

JAMES RUSSELL LOWELL.

ANOTHER night of sadness hath passed, and new hours of anguish await me. The voice of my dear one is silent — I am comfortless and alone. I ask in my grief why I, too, was not summoned into Thy presence to share with my beloved one the joys of eternal life. My soul rebels, I cannot feel resigned. If Thou dost not come to me and hold me by the hand I am lost, forsaken. O look down from Thy heights and let me feel Thine Omnipresence in this, my darkest hour; whisper unto me words of solace that I may not despair.

O that we might sleep forever, Father, that the memory of our sorrow might vanish, the heart-throbs pulsate but lightly, to pass away into dreams of happiness that is no more! But Thou wilt not have it so; our heart-strings must be tensely drawn that our natures may become refined, exalted, more

fitting to appear at Thy foot-stool when *our* Heavenly call is sounded.

Therefore, Thy will be done! and let each day teach us this seemingly severe but serviceable lesson.

Light and shadow, joy and sorrow, life and death —these are Thy watch-words, and ours be the mission to hearken unto them in a spirit of humility, as we pass along on our way to the Kingdom of Heaven. *Amen.*

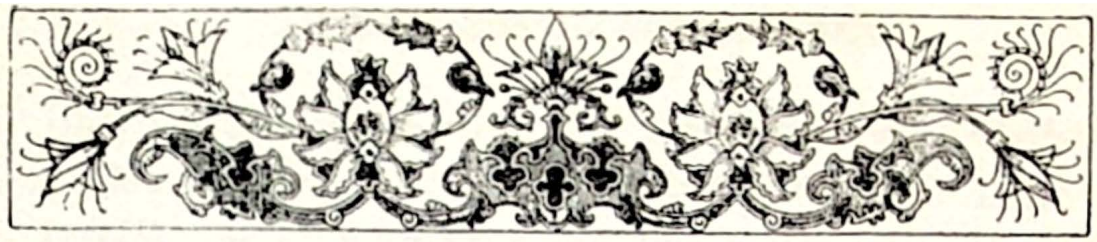
## ON THE LOSS OF A BELOVED ONE

### II

The day of suffering is a short day, but the day of remuneration is an everlasting one. HENRY WARD BEECHER.

IN Thy divine wisdom and justice which are past our finding out, Thou hast called from this earth many of our cherished kin: and hearts newly bereaved are desolate now that a dear one has gone from their side. These visitations that come to every home remind us that although our stay on earth is but a pilgrimage, it is yet a part of a larger destiny. Of a surety Thou wilt fulfill Thy promise to those who sleep in the dust. Help us to under-

stand that death does not annihilate the spirit but liberates it, that though we walk through the valley of the shadow of death, we fear no evil, for Thou art with us. May we see Thy love even in our bereavements and never doubt Thy compassion when we are in sorrow and tears. May our faith in Thy wisdom and justice give us strength in the midst of our grief to sanctify Thy name. *Amen.*



## EVENING

### IN TIME OF TROUBLE

Thou shalt consider in thine heart that as a man chasteneth his son, so the Lord thy God chasteneth thee. *Deut. viii. 5.*

ALL-MERCIFUL Father, my heart is sad and my spirit is dejected. At this silent hour of the night darker yet appear to me the trials of life, the sorrow and the perplexity which do hedge me round. My eager enjoyment has become embittered by my trouble, the dread burden of the present anxiety and the future uncertainty appall me. Soothe my soul, Thou Almighty God, assuage my suffering, and send me light and gladness, for as Thy power so is Thy mercy, and Thou canst not desire my suffering. Nay, when I think of the manifold mercies with which every period of my life has been full, when I think of the many times I have awakened with happy consciousness to the

numerous evidences of Thy fatherly love for undeserving me, I feel I ought with Thy servant David repeat: "Why art thou cast down, my soul, and why dejected? Hope thou in God, for yet will I thank Him, my ever-present help, my God."

So will I strive to banish my fears by thoughts of Thee, and subdue my anxiety with the solace of Thy goodness. I will bend to Thee and worship Thee not only in obedience to Thine expressed command, but in all the dispensations of Thy will unto me, confident always that Thy fatherly care will maintain me even in hardship, even in distress; and whether weal or woe shall come, Thy hand will not be lacking me in strength, in support, in protection. Grant peace unto my soul thus, slumber and repose to my sore-tried spirit, and grant that I may awaken unto new life and new courage, new strength and new endeavor. *Amen.*

## IN SICKNESS

The righteous cry, and the Lord heareth, and delivereth them out of their troubles: the Lord is nigh unto them that are of a broken heart; and saveth such as are of contrite spirit. *Prov. xxxiv. 17.*

BLESSED and beneficent Father, I thank and bless Thee for the calm and holy tenor of this day, for the holy spirit, the love of Thee, which Thy loving-kindness hath permitted should pervade my mind. I bless Thee for the bodily suffering Thou didst in Thy mercy make mine own, to draw me nearer to Thee. O let not these feelings depart from me; Thy mercy alone can retain them, for my sinful nature is more apt to repine and murmur at continued suffering than love and bless Thee as it hath done today.

I thank Thee, O my God, for the calm and holy thoughts Thy grace created within me; O purify and exalt them till meditations of Thee and heaven can alone employ these hours of sickness which I am compelled to pass in idleness. I thank Thee for permitting me at times to think of death. O let me be aware of its approach; guard me from the fearful state of those who know not, till the final moment, that they are about to die. I pray

not for life or death, O Lord, both are in Thy hands, and Thou wilt grant what Thy mercy deemeth best; my trust is in that mercy which Thou hast promised to show unto thousands of them that love Thee and keep Thy comandments. I plead not my own righteousness, O my Father, alas! what is it before Thee who "chargest the angels with folly?" For the glory of Thy holy name Thou wilt hear me; Thou art the God of truth, and I *know* that Thou wilt answer me. O my Father, permit me to rise tomorrow with these feelings strengthened and increased within me; my trust is in Thee, Almighty Father, O forsake me not; accept my imperfect praises, purify, exalt them, and permit them in Thy mercy to ascend to Thee. Pardon Thou the many secret and presumptuous sins whereby I may have transgressed against Thee. Guard me from them in the future, merciful Father, and permit me to resign myself more and more each day. Bless unto me the hours of sleep; and if that blessing be denied me, fill my wakeful hours with thoughts of Thee and heaven. I lay me down but lightly afflicted, yet ere the morning dawns disease may increase and death itself approach me; O my Father, let me have no

will but Thine. Thy mercy can rob even death of its sting, and bid me welcome it as calmly and thankfully as I do my bed. Secure in Thine infinite love I lay me down, and whatever befall me, if never again I may see the light of day in health, O let me have no will but Thine; I know that it is best. Bless, O bless those dear ones Thou in Thy mercy hast vouchsafed to me. Lead them in Thy paths, O my God, and grant them every blessing in this life which will prepare them for eternity. Reward unto them the constant love and care for me, and grant me that grateful spirit which will ever bid me love and pray for them. I would bless Thee, O my God, for the innumerable blessings with which Thou hast gilded my lot from the first hour that I drew breath, more particularly for those of the past day; but my sinful nature renders every effort tame and cold. O merciful Father, forget not the offerings of my heart, though I cannot give them words. Do Thou teach me to praise Thee; permit me to rise tomorrow with a glowing and a grateful heart, prepared to worship and to love Thee. And now, O let it please Thee to bless the prayer of Thy servant, that it continue forever before Thee as Thou hast promised, and with Thy

blessing, O Lord God, let the earnest supplication of Thy servant be blessed forever. *Amen.*

## ON THE LOSS OF A BELOVED ONE

### I

The Lord gave and the Lord hath taken away ; blessed be the name of the Lord. *Job i. 21.*

O GOD, as the shadows fall, betokening the close of day, my soul, too, is enwrapped in darkness, my spirit is o'erwhelmed in gloom. I would cry out to Thee in my affliction and ask that Thy chastening hand comfort me in these sad hours. To whom can I go but to Thee, Arbiter of my life and of that of the dear one whom Thou hast seen fit to take from me ? To Thee alone must I confide my secret grief—the world outside can offer no consolation. O Healer of wounds, behold the inmost recesses of my being, and do Thou lend me strength to bear my trouble. Ere I close my eyes in sleep, let me hold communion with my God, and pray that I may not fall into the depths of hopelessness and despair. Thou wilt hear me, Father, for Thou lovest me. Thy chastening hand will also watch over my suffering spirit in the silent hours of night.

Teach me not to murmur at Thy decrees, but rather to believe that whate'er Thou doest is best for me, that I may rise from my bed of sorrow purified, resigned. Aid me, and I shall endeavor not to complain, but give thanks unto Thee for Thy many mercies towards me.

Let me awake tomorrow prepared to fulfill my earthly duties, and be helpful unto others.

Praised be Thy Holy name. *Amen.*

## ON THE LOSS OF A BELOVED ONE

### II

He giveth His beloved sleep. *Ps. cxxvii. 2.*

IN the night of sorrow we turn to Thee, O God, who dwellest with the contrite of heart. At Thy command we have bedded to rest one to whom we clung with all the fibres of our being. Spread over him (her) the sheltering booth of Thy peace. We would not murmur at Thy inscrutable decree, but pray Thee for strength to bear what Thou hast put on us. Where can we find support but in Thee? Let us lie down in peace, though our hearts are sorely rent: in the night which enshrouds us now,

let Thy light shine upon us, that we may still find the path of life and willingly pursue it to the goal which Thou appointest to each of Thy children. We know that every night has its morning; that after the hours of darkness come again the hours of daylight. Grant that we, too, may rise again to do our allotted tasks in peace of soul; that we, too, may remember that the seed, oft sown in tears, ripens into a harvest to be gathered in joy.

We thank Thee for the life which in Thy love Thou hast given, and in Thy wisdom hast taken away. Make us to know Thy ways, that in our love we triumph over selfish woe and grief. Blessed art Thou who lowerest into the grave, but bringest up again; who woundest, and bindest up. Let the balm of Thy assurance be distilled into our troubled spirits, that athwart our tears may arch the rainbow of Thy eternal promise. Praise be to Thee, O God, who comfortest the mourners. *Amen.*

## MEDITATION ON DEATH

Think not I dread to see my spirit fly
Through the dark gates of fell mortality;
Death has no terrors when the life is true—
'Tis living ill that makes us fear to die.

*Omar Khayyàm.*

The birds that sang in my house, and that nestled in my cradle—mine—they do not sleep where their little bodies are. I have not lost them. They are all singing in the boughs of the Tree of Life. HENRY WARD BEECHER.

FATHER of life and death! Nothing interferes so much with our happiness on earth as the removal of dear persons who had been linked to our fondest love. Every separation makes a deep scar upon our souls, and the mournful reflection that again a link has broken off from the mighty chain of our affections saddens our hearts and depresses our spirits. Our life is nothing but a tale that is told, a dream that vanishes, a vapor that passes off, a cloud that floats away—nay, a tiny drop that flows into the broad ocean of eternity. What, then, are all the great designs and mighty schemes of mortal man? Thy hand passes over him, and his aspirations have ceased and his enterprises are heard of no more. The young and the old, the sick and the

healthy, the rich and the poor, royalty and the common laborer — all alike have to enter the dark and dismal grave. Our whole existence on earth is nothing but a frail fragment of mere piece-work. Piece-work is our love, piece-work, our labor, piece-work, our lofty aims, and piece-work are our achievements and ideals on earth.

And yet there is, after all, one hope which like a sweet light brightens up to us the road to eternity. Do we die forever, or shall we behold beyond this earthly mansion that Realm of Immortality? Our heart and our belief draw us with a thousand ties to this blissful land, and whatever our reason may say to the contrary, our strong faith in a life hereafter removes from us every sceptical thought. "Stars meet stars again after thousands and thousands of years," and are we human beings not of more value than is the star?

In this hope and confidence, we remember before Thee in this solemn hour those who have departed from this terrestrial abode. Thou hast taken away the only supporter — the father — from his family, the mother from the sweet circle of her children, sons and daughters from their affectionate surroundings, and relatives and friends from the

hearths of those who treasured them. There are also many who bewail the mortal departure of their little ones scarcely entered upon their juvenile lives, cut off prematurely in the age of sweet hope and pure innocence from the land of the living.

Though we all feel our losses very keenly and remember them before Thee with tearful eye and grievous heart, yet we bow in faithful submission to Thy wise decree, and exclaim: "Father, what Thou doest is done well."

O God, keep Thy gracious hand over our families and over every soul that lives and breathes on earth. Let us grow old in the midst of those we revere and love, and when they have parted from us let us remember them and see them in our mind's eye on all occasions and at all times.

Graciously keep the parents to the children and the children to the parents. Inscribe us all in the book of life, and call none away in the prime of youth or in the bloom and flower of development. Fill the hearts of the sorrowful with gladness and rejoice the soul of the bereaved with hopeful trust. However, if it be Thy will to call us away from this world, make our separation from life's motley scenes easy and bearable, and let us pass from

hence in peace with our family, in peace with our neighbor, and in peace with every human being. Let that good name and excellent reputation which we leave behind secure to us an immortality here below and an immortality in yonder heights. *Amen.*

HERMAN BAAR.

## REST

MY feet are wearied, and my hands are tied,
My soul oppressed—
And I desire, what I have long desired—
Rest—only rest.

'Tis hard to toil, when toil is almost vain,
In barren ways ;
'Tis hard to sow, and never garner grain
In harvest days.

The burden of my days is hard to bear,
But God knows best ;
And I have prayed, but vain has been my prayer,
For rest—sweet rest.

'Tis hard to plant in Spring, and never reap
The Autumn yield ;
'Tis hard to till, and when 't is tilled to weep
O'er fruitless field.

And so I cry a weak and human cry,
So heart-oppressed ;
And so I sigh a weak and human sigh,
For rest—for rest.

My way has wound across the desert years,
And cares infest
My path, and through the flowing of hot tears
I pine for rest.

'Twas always so ; when but a child I laid
On mother's breast
My wearied little head ; e'en then I prayed,
And now, for rest.

And I am restless still ; 'twill soon be o'er ;
For down the west
Life's sun is setting, and I see the shore
Where I shall rest.

FATHER RYAN.

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